



Document AP11/15/2
Meeting Number APolicy11/1
Confirmed

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2011

PRESENT: Mrs H Marshall (vice Ms D Boden), Ms A Ferrari, Ms K Roden (vice Ms C Kenny), Prof M Mannion (Chair), Prof E McFarland (vice Prof J Wilson), Dr A Pierotti, Dr A S Eadie, Mr S Ward, Mr M Andrews, Ms R Whittaker, Ms E Smith (vice Prof D Greenhalgh)

APOLOGIES: Prof N Andrews, Prof D Greenhalgh, Prof D Smith, Prof J Wilson, Mr I Stewart, Ms C Kenny, Ms D Boden

BY INVITATION: Prof K Gartland, Ms T Fraser, Mr E B Ferguson,

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs J Ash (Secretary)

MINUTES

11.001 **Considered:** The unconfirmed draft minutes of the Academic Policy Committee meeting held on 25 May 2011
(APC11/02/1)

11.002 **Resolved:** That, subject to the inclusion of LC instead of CK in 10.070 and the amendment of 10.078 to read “with pre-entry RPL claims managed and recorded by SRAS and the post-entry RPL claims process managed in the Schools by Associate Deans of Learning, Teaching and Quality”, the minutes be approved as a correct record

MATTERS ARISING

11.003 **Considered:** Any matters arising from the above minutes not otherwise covered on the agenda.

GCU London (arising on 10.167)

11.004 **Reported:** That the formalisation of support function processes between GCU Glasgow and GCU London was ongoing.
(Action: SH and Academic Registrar)

CCEO (arising on 10.168)

- 11.005 Resolved:** That a response had now been received and approved by Chair's Action

Progression and Retention (arising on 10.169)

- 11.006 Resolved:** That discussion take place offline between the Chair and the Director of Quality on reporting mechanisms through the APA to ensure these were adequate.
(Action ASE, MM)

Blackboard (arising on 10.170)

- 11.007 Reported:** That Dr Creanor and the Head of Organisational Development were working together on this.
(Action: LC, AS (RW))

Library Strategy – ISSG membership (arising on 10.171)

- 11.008 Reported:** That the Chair would liaise with ISSG on blended learning and Dr Creanor's membership on the ISSG.
(Action: MM)

Forward Programme (arising on 10.173)

- 11.009 Resolved:** That the Forward Programme had been approved by the Executive Deans
(Action: ASE)

Flexible Entry Policy/RPL (arising on 10.179)

- 11.010 Reported:** That supporting guidelines would be prepared for staff and students and the Chair and Ms Whittaker had discussed appropriate staff development.
(Action: MM, RW)

- 11.011 Resolved:** That the amendments to the operation of the policy and guidelines be approved to reflect current strategy without need for further Senate approval

Caledonian Scholars and Associates (arising on 10.178)

- 11.012 Resolved:** That work on the implementation of the report and its recommendations had been followed through.

21st Century Graduate Attributes (arising on 10.188)

- 11.013 Reported:** That Ms Thomson was setting up an implementation group
(Action: MM, KT)

Academic Cases (arising on 10.210)

1. MSc in Engineering and Computing Suite (APC10/62/1)

- 11.014** **Reported:** That Chair's Action had been taken on this but it had inadvertently been missed from the agenda.

CBS GCU London Register of Approved Programmes 2011/12 (arising on 10.216)

- 11.015** **Resolved:** That the Director of Quality and the ADLTQ reconsider the above register
(Action: ASE, EM)

CHAIR'S REPORT

Considered: A verbal report by the Chair on points of interest to the Committee.

Scottish Government White paper: Building a Smarter Future: towards a sustainable Scottish Solution for the future of Higher Education

- 11.016** **Reported:** That the Scottish Government had published on its website a White Paper called "Building a Smarter Future: towards a sustainable Scottish Solution for the future of Higher Education" which saw the government appear to be using legislation to have more control over what Universities taught. The consultation would close in late December. Universities Scotland and the University would respond.

Roadshows

- 11.017** **Reported:** That a roadshow would take place with Assessment Feedback being a key discussion point.

Committee work

- 11.018** **Reported:** That future work for the Committee over the session would include:

Review of Languages provision
Social Mobility
Key information sets
Retention and Completion with particular focus on Widening Participation, undergraduate and taught post graduate
Blackboard usage
Ongoing work on Assessment and Feedback
Consideration of Student Surveys

LTSC ITEMS

- 11.019** **Reported:** That item B5 (ELISR Timetable) is referred from LTSC. (See 11.061)

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

- 11.020** **Considered:** The proposed Student Feedback Enhancement Implementation Plan (Note: Prof K Gartland attended the meeting to talk to the paper) (APC11/13/1)

- 11.021** **Reported:** By Prof Gartland, that Senate had approved, in June 2011, a series of recommendations designed to enhance feedback with the aim of improving

feedback returned through the National Student Survey (NSS). The paper outlined the implementation plan. Prof Gartland thanked the Planning Office for the provision of data, from internal and external sources.

Specific points to note were that the provision of feedback was variable across the University. In some areas only 1 out of 5 students received prompt feedback; in some areas only 1 in 4 received comments and in some areas only 1 out of 3 believed comments helped them to understand problematic areas. The implementation plan was laid out as a series of actions for each objective with the main aims being to increase ISB and NSS scores and to enhance awareness among students and staff on what the Student Feedback Policy was. A Group including representatives from APC was working with the Students' Association to enhance perception. It was noted that there would also be a lot of responsibility placed on Associate Deans Learning, Teaching and Quality (ADLTQs) to work with staff in Schools.

11.022 Discussion: Workshops were listed in Objective 4 but it was pointed out that there were other practical tools that could be used which involved the new Centre for Educational Development working directly with Programme teams. This would be discussed further at the Feedback Enhancement Group and it was noted that there was a budget set aside for this kind of activity.

It was noted that targets from the paper approved by Senate were challenging. A question was asked as to whether data from 2008, 2009 or 2010 should be used as a baseline but this had already been agreed as 2009.

A member asked whether the balance of activity was correct and it was agreed that involvement of the Students' Association was key and there should be a student rep – ideally an officer and a current student as well as a Programme Leader - on the implementation group. This was agreed. Prof Gartland would discuss this with the Students' Association and work out the detail of Objective 2.
(Action: KG, SW)

Although the Students' Association reps pointed out that all students should be involved and those at lower levels would have more time to engage, initially Level 3 and 4 and M students would be targeted as they would be completing the surveys.

Objective 5 referred to Questback which no longer operated in the University but it had been current at the time that Senate approved the paper.

Objective 9 - Members commended the idea of an award for Feedback. Prof Gartland and the Student VP Education would discuss this. The Acting Director of Marketing indicated that Marketing and Communication could assist with publicity, focus groups and web design.
(Action: KG, SW)

Objective 10 - A member asked for more detail of the pro forma. It was envisaged that it would be simple. How it would be created and implemented would be a matter for Schools as there was no central support. As it should be done consistently in Schools, it was a matter for the Executive Deans to discuss
(Action: DH, NJ, JW)

A suitable system was used in the University of Wolverhampton and Prof Gartland would learn more about this and report back to the group
(Action: KG)

11.023 Resolved: That the Student Feedback Enhancement Implementation Plan be supported with the inclusion of a student, a Student Association Officer and a Programme Leader added to the Feedback Enhancement Group
(Action: KG)

11.024 Recommended (to Senate): That the Student Feedback Enhancement Implementation Plan be approved

POLICY FOR MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF INCIDENTS FOR STUDENTS

11.025 Considered: The above proposed policy (APC11/10/1) (Note: Ms T Fraser attended the meeting to talk to this item)

11.026 Reported: By the Head of Campus Services, that the background to the paper was that Facilities and Learner Support recommended the use of a process for dealing with and reporting untoward events. Such events could involve welfare services, security, Caledonian Court, programme staff etc and it was useful if everyone had all the relevant information about a particular situation. The proposed model was used elsewhere and a small group involving Information Compliance, Equality and Diversity and the Academic Registry had met to discuss an appropriate process. Communication to staff and short training sessions would be required.

11.027 Discussion: The Committee welcomed the paper in principle. Members agreed that more work was needed before it could be properly considered, particularly background and contextual information, the purpose, as outlined in Ms Fraser's introduction, and information on the current situation, the role of those involved and the relationship to the Senate Disciplinary Committee. Discussion should take place with the new Head of Student Administration Services and a further paper be submitted to the Committee.
(Action: TF)

11.028 Resolved: That a revised paper be submitted to the Committee including further information as outlined above.

NSS REPORT 2011

11.029 Considered: The results of the above Survey at University and School level (APC11/8/1) (Note: Ms K Roden attended the meeting to talk to this item)

11.030 Reported: By Ms Roden, that the paper provided an overview of the results for 2011. This was the 5th year in which the university had participated. There was 82% satisfaction overall which was a 1% decrease on the previous year. Detailed reports had been given to Schools and the Planning Office would liaise with ADLTQs.

11.031 Discussion: Members indicated that the information recorded was very useful and would help Schools identify the areas for improvement. The Planning Office

would undertake scenario planning and consider the weightings given to individual questions.

Attempts were being made to encourage students to complete the survey. The Students' Association indicated that the best motivator for students to complete the survey was to know that changes which would benefit future students would be made in response to their comments. It was also important to note that the reputation of the graduating students could be affected by the responses made to the surveys.

11.032 Resolved: That the report be noted

EXTERNAL ASSESSORS – CHANGE TO PERIOD OF TENURE

11.033 Considered: A paper proposing a five year period of tenure for External Assessors (APC11/6/1)

11.034 Reported: By the Director of Quality, that for most External Assessors an extension was applied for so they served for 5 years. The proposal was therefore for five years with no extension.

11.035 Resolved: That the proposals be approved and the Assessment Regulations amended.
(Action: QO)

MOVING FORWARD

11.036 Consider: The final report and recommendations (APC11/7/1) (Executive Summary)

11.037 Reported: By the Director of the Centre for Learning Development, that this was the final report of the University-wide initiative which had run for 3 years. The full report had been e-mailed to members.

11.038 Discussion: Members welcomed the report and recognised the good ideas that had come out of the initiative on which future work could be built. All those involved were thanked and good practice would be taken forward.

11.039 Resolved: That the report be welcomed and those involved be thanked.

ATTENDANCE MONITORING

11.040 Considered: Proposed principles of an Attendance Policy (APC11/9/1)

11.041 Reported: By the Director of Quality, the University was now required to report on attendance to both SAAS and UKBA. Schools had been consulted before the paper was produced. Until an electronic system had been developed, schools would be responsible for their own monitoring. To use a biometric system would take 1 hour 20 minutes to fingerprint-check all the students in the Carnegie Lecture Theatre.

11.042 Considered: Student Attendance Monitoring and Reporting update (tabled addendum to agenda (APC11/14/1)

11.043 Reported: By Mr Ferguson, the Academic Registrar, who attended the meeting to talk to the paper, that the paper reflected changes in monitoring which the University was required to undertake. In the past, attendance had been related to pastoral care. It was now a matter of compliance with SAAS and UKBA requirements. A weekly report (proposed to be a daily report from 2012/13) had to be submitted to SAAS on all students from a fees prospective; fees payment would be based on attendance. It was critical that reporting to UKBA was accurate and they would audit the University in Autumn. If evidence was found that the University was not reporting attendance properly, the University would have ten working days to address issues and, if not, there would be penalties which could result in the University losing its highly trusted sponsor status which would mean it would be unable to recruit international students or teach current international students.

A Working Group had been convened to consider the introduction of an electronic system; such a system was unlikely to be available until next session. Existing manual systems would be used which everyone must adhere to.

The paper took existing policies and updated them to ensure they were in line with UKBA and SAAS and reflected the new University structure. There was little change to the actual policies apart from two aspects. The statement in the Assessment Regulations referred only to monitoring at Levels 1 and 2. All levels including postgraduate research now required to be monitored. In addition, previously if a student had been absent for 10 working days, the Academic Registry would be contacted. The new regulations required contact to be made if a student was absent for 5 working days. SAAS then had to be informed immediately and UKBA within 10 working days.

11.044 Discussion: Members recognised that this was vitally important. As the paper had been tabled members were asked to submit their comments to the Academic Registrar in the next 24 hours.

It was noted that the attendance of those undertaking dissertations was also required.

It was completely impractical to monitor attendance in large lecturers but the message was that students should attend everything to comply with the University's duty of care and because of the correlation between attendance and performance, as well as for legal compliance. Monitoring inevitably increased bureaucracy for the University but this was faced by all Universities and had been drawn to the attention of the Home Office to no avail.

Clarification was required in Section 4.4 of whether it was 2 weeks or 10 days or 10 working days.

A separate guide would be prepared for students and information had already been issued at induction. A communication strategy should be introduced and included in prospectuses and handbooks and on webpages.

11.045 Resolved:

1. That paragraph 4.4 be amended
(**Action: EBF**)

2. That the current statement in the Assessment Regulations be removed
3. That the Student Attendance Monitoring and Reporting update be approved
4. That the Proposed Principles of an Attendance Policy be approved in principle subject amendment to the duration of absence to be in line with SAAS and UKBA requirements. *(post meeting note: subsequent to the meeting the Academic Registrar sought further comments from various constituencies throughout the University; these comments have now been incorporated and the Policy has now been published on the University's website and highlighted during the recent UKBA Roadshows)*

ELIR

11.046 Consider: Areas for Development as outlined in the Summary Report (APC11/11/1)

11.047 Reported: By the Director of Quality, that the outcome was good for the University and all those involved were thanked for their work. A written response to QAA was required within a year of publication. The Director of Quality would check the date *(post meeting note: the response to the QAA is due on or before 29 July 2012)*
(Action: ASE)

The University received 9 areas of positive practice and 3 areas for development. 2 of these had already been identified by the University and related to Feedback on Assessment and Management Information. The third area was Annual Monitoring and the Chair and Director of Quality would prepare a plan.
(Action ASE/MM)

11.048 Resolved: That the report be noted

11.049 Recommended (to Senate): That the report be considered

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND COMPOSITION

11.050 Approved: The Terms of Reference and revised Composition (APC11/01/1)

ANNUAL REPORT 2011/11

11.051 Approved: The Annual Report from the Committee for submission to Senate, subject to the inclusion of the future objectives mentioned in the Chair's Report and the removal of Language Review (APC11/3/1)

EXCEPTIONS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2010/ 11

11.052 Approved: The Annual Report to the Committee from the Exceptions Committee (APC11/5/1)

11.053 Reported: That the Committee operated well but revisions were needed to the membership to reflect the new University structure and ensure that responses were made. It was noted that the recent revision to the regulations on minimum marks

paragraph 8 had resulted in many applications for exception as a result of Professional; and Statutory Body requirements.

- 11.054 Resolved:** That consideration be given to membership and to paragraph 8 of the regulations
(Action: ASE/MM)

ELISR

- 11.055 Considered: (as Part A)** The report and responses from the School of Health (Nursing, Midwifery and Community Health provision) (APC11/12/1)
- 11.056 Reported:** That the Scottish Funding Council required the report to be with them by 30 September. As the event had been postponed 3 times due to the unavailability of external members, a revised submission date of 30 October 2011 was agreed. The report had to be submitted to Senate, the Executive Board and Court.
- 11.057 Discussion:** The Director of Quality had chaired the event and reported that there were a number of items of good practice including improved skills reported on by employers, high quality learning and teaching, good blended learning and outstanding Academic Development Tutors who were well-liked by staff and students. Areas for enhancement included the lack of a workload model and confusion between Bachelor of Nursing and BA(Hons) Nursing which were separately funded and of different durations. An Action Plan on technical based learning was needed and a paper on surveys including module evaluation would come to LTSC and APC. (Action: CK)
- 11.058 Resolved:** That as the paper had been tabled, comments should be forwarded to the Director of Quality by **30 September 2011**
(Action :all)

ELISR TIMETABLE 2011-2016

- 11.059 Approved:** The Schedule of planned Enhancement Led Internal Subject Reviews from 2011 – 2016 (APC11/4/1) subject to consideration of the timing of the review of the Graduate School
(Action:ASE)
- 11.060 Discussion:** It was suggested that Chairs be appointed at an early stage in order that dates could be set.
(Action: QO)
- 11.061 Recommended** (to Senate): That the timetable be approved

LEARNING AND TEACHING SUB-COMMITTEE

- 11.062 Approved:** The minutes of the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee meetings held on 4 May 2011 (LTSC10/70/2) and 22 June 2011 (LTSC11/01/2)

CHAIR'S ACTIONS

11.063 **Reported:** That an additional Chair's action not listed on the agenda had been taken:

MSC IN ENGINEERING AND COMPUTING SUITE

Considered: The revised application (APC10/62/2) which includes all relevant signatures and a revision of the titles to differentiate between the programmes as required by the Academic Policy Committee.

Resolved: That the amended application be approved.

Reported: That the following Chair's Actions have been taken

1 ACADEMIC CASE: MSC INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Considered: The Academic Case for the above programme.

Resolved: That the Academic Case be approved.

2 ACADEMIC CASE: MSc Vision Science

Considered: Revisions to the documentation (APC10/51/1) to include signatures, approval by the Executive Dean and clarification of the costings.

Resolved: That the academic case be approved.

3 GCU LONDON REGISTER OF APPROVED PROGRAMMES: MSC INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Considered: The addition of the above programme to the Register

Resolved: That the addition of the above programme to the Register be approved.

4 CALEDONIAN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, OMAN - Response and Action Plan to the report of the visit

Considered: The above response and action plan.

Resolved: That the response and action plan be approved.