

## ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2012

- PRESENT:** Professor R Whittaker (Chair), Ms D Borrett, Ms J Edwards, Ms C Fyfe, Professor D Greenhalgh, Mrs C Hulsen, Ms J Main, Mr R Ruthven, Mr A Pierotti, Professor D Smith and Professor B Steves.
- APOLOGIES:** Professor N James, Mr S Laing, Professor M Mannion, Ms S McGiffen, Mr I Stewart and Professor J Wilson.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr N Dennis, Mrs D Donnet (Secretary), Ms E Smith and Ms K Thomson.

### CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair wished the Director of Policy and Planning well on her forthcoming maternity leave and welcomed Jo Edwards, who would be assuming the role of Director of Policy and Planning in Mrs Hulsen's absence. The Chair also welcomed each of the three School Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching Quality to the meeting as well as Deborah Donnet, Committee Secretary.

There would be an extraordinary Academic Policy Committee meeting early in the new year to consider the Portfolio Refresh which was reporting at the end of January 2013.

### MINUTES

- 12.042            Approved:            The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Academic Policy Committee meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2012 (Doc APC12/14/1).

### MATTERS ARISING

#### Feedback Enhancement Implementation Group (arising on APCMin 12.004)

- 12.043            Reported:            By the Secretary that the Feedback Enhancement Implementation Group had undertaken a number of activities this semester including a total of 71 workshops attended by 683 students, the launch of a Feedback for Future Learning GCU Learn Community, staff engagement meetings and a variety of events and external promotion.

#### Learning Development Centres (arising on APCMin 12.013)

- 12.044            Reported:            By the ADLTQ (SEBE) that
- i.    Improvements were being made in ISIS to flag up students who attended GCU via widening participation routes and that it would be possible to report specifically on these in the future.
  - ii.   A Communications Strategy had been developed by Communications and Marketing including publicity materials and social media presence and that the individual LDCs were now developing and sharing their own marketing materials and activities. It was intended to increase awareness of LDCs with a re-launch at the start of Semester B; and
  - iii.   While the support needs of Widening Participation students (MD20 students) needed to be explicitly addressed by the LDCs, no students would be denied access to the services offered by the LDCs.

Concept Paper GSBS (arising on APCMin 12.024)

- 12.045            Reported:            By the ADLTQ (GSfBS) that the reintroduced LLM would be run initially in Glasgow and that the business case would be included in the portfolio refresh taking place in January 2013.

Widening Participation and Progression – GCU Work and Study Research Report (arising on APCMin 12.036)

- 12.046            Reported:            Professor Smith encouraged GCU staff to take part in interviews if asked as part of the next phase of the research.

**NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY ACTION PLANS**

12. 047            Considered:            A report by the Director of Policy and Planning informing that Schools had been provided with detailed analysis of the results of the 2012 National Student Survey at programme level along with trend and benchmarking data and had developed NSS Action Plans to address issues and areas of concern. (DocAPC12/15/1).
- 12.048            Reported:            By the Director of Policy and Planning that the University Court had requested an update on assessment and feedback, and that consideration was being given to developing a University level Action Plan. It was intended to include the NSS results and Action Plans on the portal when it was launched at the end of the year.
- 12.049            Discussed:            i.    The Director of Library Services welcomed the explicit mention of Library Services in the Action Plans and that the Department would be happy to work with the Schools in the delivery of the Action Plans;
- ii.   The ADLTQ (GSfBS) noted that the level of Overall Satisfaction for his School had been recorded at 84% but this should read 85%; and
- iii.   The GCUSA VP Education commented that whilst the Students Association was very supportive of the Action Plans and what they hoped to achieve, the Association would have preferred the opportunity to work more closely with the Schools in developing the Plans. However, it was explained that it would be more appropriate for the Students Association to become involved in the implementation stage and this was accepted

by the GCUSA representatives.

12.050 Resolved: To note the report.

#### **PROGRESSION AND RETENTION 2011-12**

12.051 Considered: A report by the Director of Policy and Planning reporting on

- i. Progression and retention of full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students in 2011-12; and
- ii. Reviewing performance by level and School, including HN and international students.

(DocAPC12/17/1)

12.052 Reported: By the Director of Policy and Planning

- i. An improvement in full-time undergraduate progression and retention by 3% at Level 1 and 5% at Level 4;
- ii. No change at undergraduate Levels 2 and 3;
- iii. An overall improvement at all levels by HNC/HND students;
- iv. International progression and retention had decreased at Levels 1 and 2 but had increased at Levels 3 and 4;
- v. Full-time postgraduate progression and completion had improved by 3% to 84%; and
- vi. International numbers were very small at undergraduate level, but 84% of international students at both the Glasgow and London campuses were either awarded a Masters or were eligible to proceed to the next stage.

12.053 Discussed: One area of concern was the number of students leaving with ordinary degrees, especially HNC/HND students with only 64% of them progressing to Level 4. It was noted that work was on-going with colleges to work towards improving this. It was also acknowledged that often articulating students wished to articulate to level 2 but that the SFC preferred articulation to Level 3, but that this often resulted in too big a knowledge gap between college and university curricula. This has been acknowledged by the SFC and there was a SFC-funded SQA pilot project focussing on this in four subject areas:- Engineering, Computing, Business and Social Sciences.

It was noted that the figures for International Students did not include EU students.

12.054 Resolved To note the report and to thank the Director of Policy and Planning for providing such detailed information on this matter for the first time.

#### **STUDENT INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY**

12.055 Considered: A report by the Chair of the Staff Student International Mobility Sub-Committee containing

- i. A proposal for the role of Exchange Co-ordinator across the University; and
- ii. A module descriptor template for all students participating in international exchange (DocAPC12/18/1).

12.056 Reported: By the Chair that

- i. The report had been considered by the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee and that the module descriptor had been amended to reflect the Sub-Committee's comments; and
- ii. Whilst the report indicated that the International Mobility Co-ordination Group should be Chaired by the Associate Deans (International) the PVC Learning and Teaching wished the Group to be Chaired by the ADLTQs.

12.057 Discussed: Concern was raised that this initiative had been developed without taking cognisance of the wider Internationalisation Strategy and that it needed further discussion with the Executive Deans and PVC International and External Relations. It was also felt that the role title of "Exchange Co-ordinator" did not fully reflect the wide range of activities the role would undertake.

12.058 Resolved:

- i. Not to approve the report; and
- ii. That further discussions with the Executive Deans and PVC International and External Relations were required.

#### **TAUGHT STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY**

12.059 Considered: The Taught Student Attendance Policy by the Head of Student Administration Services (DocAPC12/19/1).

12.060 Reported: That the Policy had been updated as a result of the investment in a new attendance and engagement monitoring system, which was working well with the students although there were some outstanding training issues for staff still to be resolved.

12.061 Discussed:

- i. It was observed that whilst the new swipe card system met UKBA requirements, KELPIE was still being used for disabled students so more work was required to have one system suitable for all; and
- ii. Reference to reporting responsibilities to the SFC regarding withdrawn students should be included in the policy (Section 1 d.) and that the Library and Helpdesk should also be notified if students withdraw.

12.062 Noted: The Research Student Attendance Policy had been redrafted following the template of the Taught Student Policy and was currently going through the early stages of consideration prior to submission for approval at the next Academic Policy Committee meeting.

12.063 Resolved: To approve the revised policy subject to the inclusion of any minor amendments submitted via the Director of Student Experience.

#### **DESTINATIONS OF GCU GRADUATES 2010/10**

12.064 Considered: A paper by the Head of Careers and Employability providing an overview of the destinations of UK domiciled leavers from GCU who obtained qualifications during the academic year 2010/11 (DocAPC12/21/1).

12.065 Reported

- i. That the data had been compiled from the statutory Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) return

- to HESA;
  - ii. That significant progress had been made resulting in the University's best performance in a decade in the HESA Employment Indicator with a score of 93.5% which was above the University's benchmark indicator and was middle of the range for Scotland;
  - iii. Attention would now be focussing on making further improvements in the extent to which GCU graduates were employed in graduate level employment and the Careers Service were proactively working with Schools to undertake further analysis to inform the development of action plans directed towards the GCU Strategic Plan 2015;
  - iv. The Destination of Leaver data had been reported at the Graduate Insight event held on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012;
  - v. Work would be undertaken to achieving a closer fit with the annual process of compiling KIS to provide Schools with the most current and accurate information for the fields relating to graduate employment; and
  - vi. Roadshows were being organised on Graduate Employment and the DLHE as a starting point for implementing more structured and embedded student career and employability development.
- 12.066                      Noted
- i. The Executive Dean (SEBE) advised that a number of the School's part-time students were employed in graduate level jobs but there did not seem to be a way of capturing this in the return. Whilst this appeared to be recorded by other institutions, it was not clear how this was done but it would be investigated for future returns.
  - ii. That SEBE was the only School where graduate level employment was higher for graduates with an honours degree than an ordinary degree. For the SHLS this was partly due to the fact that nursing is a three year degree and similarly for GSfBS, it was felt that students left at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> year if they had secured graduate level employment, whereas an Honours degree was a requirement for many graduate level jobs in engineering.
- 12.067                      Resolved:
- To endorse the work being undertaken by the Careers Service in respect of the DHLE data.

**UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS POLICY**

- 12.068                      Considered:
- The revised University Admissions Policy by the Head of Global Admission (Doc APC12/22/1).
- 12.069                      Reported:
- By the Chair that due to a change in the meeting schedule for this committee cycle which meant that this meeting took place after Senate, a draft report had previously been circulated to Committee members for their comments prior to a finalised report being considered by Senate at its meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012.
- 12.070                      Discussed:
- i. Concern was raised in relation to the requirement for "admissions decisions to be made as quickly as possible" as it was felt that this would be hard to achieve where interviews were required;

- ii. Uncertainty was expressed about the implementation of a contextualised admissions process as there had been no guidance to Schools' admissions teams on how this should be undertaken.
- iii. There was inconsistency in referring to both Student Recruitment and Admissions Service and the Admissions and Enquiries Service in the policy and it was not clear if they were the same thing.

12.071 Resolved: To endorse the report subject to clarification being received on the points outlined above.

### RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

12.072 Considered: The Revised Recognition of Prior learning (RPL) Policy by the Head of GCU Lead (Doc APC12/23/1).

12.073 Reported: Following the implementation of the current RPL policy in May 2011 it was agreed to provide further guidance on

- i. The identification of RPL support and assessment activity within the staff workload model;
- ii. Further elaboration of the issue of double counting of credit and the criteria to be used to determine when this is acceptable; and
- iii. The introduction of a university wide model for a fee model for RPL for self-funded students to ensure consistency and transparency across the University.

12.074 Discussed: Within the context of the criteria for the allowance of double counting of credit, the issue of whether the allowance of up to 40 credits from previously completed qualifications to be transferred to GCU qualifications *which are at the same level* should be amended to 30 credits for postgraduate programmes was discussed. Since the allowance of 40 credits allows for up to 2 modules at undergraduate level the question was raised as to whether 30 credits is sufficient in terms of enabling up to two modules to be 'double counted' at Postgraduate level. However since postgraduate programmes can be made up of 20 credit, as well as 15 credit modules, it was agreed that the limit of 40 credits should remain for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

12.075 Resolved: To approve the Revised RPL Policy taking account of the points raised above.

### ANNUAL PROGRAMME MONITORING

12.076 Considered: A report from ADLTQ (SEBE), Chair of the Annual Programme Monitoring Working Group (Doc APC/12/27/1).

12.077 Reported: By the ADLTQ (SEBE)

- i. That the PVC Learning and Teaching had established a short life working group, chaired by the ADLTQ (SEBE) to review the current annual programme monitoring process and make recommendations for a more streamlined process for implementation in the current academic year;

- ii. The Working Group had recommended the use of a dynamic on-line form which would allow the form to be accessed in its most up to date format by all users;
- iii. The form would be hosted initially on GCULearn although the Staff Portal would be an option for the future;
- iv. The same processes for Annual Programme Monitoring should be adopted across the University;
- v. Most data required for the form would be available earlier than in previous years which should allow the completion of the process by Christmas, the only exception being DLHE data where the data for the previous year's cohort would have to be used;
- vi. Data would be pre-loaded onto the form prior to Programme Leaders accessing it; and
- vii. The ADLTQ (SEBE) would be preparing the necessary files on GCULearn for all Schools together with guidance notes.

- 12.078 Discussed: Members noted the revised process and the ADLTQ (SHLS) advised that the School of Health and Life Sciences was trialling the portal so it would be possible to run a trial of the revised process on the Portal at the same time as it was running on GCULearn. The Director of Policy and Planning indicated that student feedback data could also be included in the revised process.
- 12.079 Resolved: To accept the recommendations of the Annual Programme Monitoring Short life Working Group.

**ACADEMIC CASE: EXTENSION TO COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN GUC AND CALEDONIAN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, OMAN (POSTGRADUATE PROVISION)**

- 12.080 Considered: An academic case submitted by the School of Engineering and the Built Environment for the extension to collaborative arrangements between GCU and Caledonian College of Engineering, Oman (Postgraduate provision) (Doc APC12/28/1).
- 12.081 Reported:
  - i. The contract with GCU and the Caledonian College of Engineering, Oman was currently being renegotiated;
  - ii. That due to increasing growth in the energy and construction sectors within Oman there is demand for an MSc Construction Management and MSc Energy, Environmental and Waste Management; and
  - iii. That if approved, these two programmes would also need the approval of Oman's Ministry of Higher Education.
- 12.082 Resolved: To approve to academic case for extending the taught postgraduate provision at the Caledonian College of Engineering, Oman to include an MSc Waste Management and an MSc Energy, Environmental and Waste Management, having noted that a business case would follow in due course.

**STAFF STUDENT INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY SUB-COMMITTEE**

- 12.083 Approved: The confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2012 (Doc SSIM12/1/1).

**LEARNING AND TEACHING SUB-COMMITTEE**

12.084            Approved:            The confirmed minutes of the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2012 (Doc LTSC12/11/1).

**SEBE PROGRAMME CONCEPT PAPER – MSc ADVANCED INTERNETWORKED ENGINEERING**

12.085            Approved:            A concept paper from School of Engineering and Built Environment for a new programme entitled MSc Advanced Internetworked Engineering (Doc APC12/24/1).

**SEBE PROGRAMME CONCEPT PAPER – ADDITION TO ENGINEERING FRAMEWORK**

12.086            Approved:            A reworked concept paper from School of Engineering and Built Environment, previously considered by this Committee at its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2012, for the introduction of an MSc Power Electronics (PG), MSc Electrical and Electronic Engineering (PG) and MEng Electrical and Electronic Engineering (UG) to the existing Engineering Framework (Doc APC12/11/2).

**EXTENSION TO GCU LONDON PORTFOLIO – MSc IT SECURITY**

12.087            Approved:            A proposal from the School of Engineering and Built Environment to add the MSc IT Security programme to the GCU London portfolio (Doc APC12/25/1).

**PROPOSAL TO RENAME THE PDEET SUITE**

12.088            Approved:            A request from School of Engineering and Built Environment to rename programmes currently within the Product Design Engineering for Electronic Technologies (PDEET) suite of programmes (Doc APC12/26/1).

**CHAIR'S ACTIONS**

12.089            Reported:            That the following Chair's Action had been taken since the last meeting of APC:-

GCU London – Extension to Programme Portfolio

That the School of Engineering and Built Environment programmes, MSc Web Systems Development (.NET) and MSc Information Technology have been added to the portfolio of programmes on offer at GCU London. The programmes have been approved for both full and part time delivery (Doc APC12/16/1).

**SCOTTISH FUNDING COUNCIL OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2013-14**

12.090            Noted:                A report by the Director of Policy and Planning informing of Scottish Funding Council guidance for the development of an Outcome Agreement for 2013-14 and the progress to date, the report having previously been approved at Senate on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2012 (Doc APC12/29/1).