



Meeting Number APC16/2  
**Confirmed**

## ACADEMIC POLICY AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2016

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Dr N. Andrew, Professor T. Buggy (vice Professor I. Cameron) Dr D. Chalmers, Mr C. Daisley, Professor T. Hilton, Mr S. Lopez, Ms J. Main, Mr V. McKay, Ms L. Ramage, Dr S. Rate, Mr R. Ruthven, Mr I. Stewart, Professor V. Webster (Chair) Professor R. Whittaker	
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	Professor R. Clougherty, Ms S. McGiffen, Dr N. McLarnon, Professor A. Morgan, Dr M. Sharp, Professor B. Steves, Mrs M. Wright	
<b>BY INVITATION:</b>	Ms D. Donnet, Ms S. MacNeill, Dr K. McPherson, Professor S. McMeekin	
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Mr P. Woods (Secretary)	
<b>Welcome</b>		
The acting Chair welcomed new member Dr Chalmers and Professor Britton to their first meeting as a members of APPC.		
<b>MINUTES</b>		
16.043	Considered	The minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2016 ( <b>APC16/01/01</b> ).
16.044	Resolved	That the minutes be approved as a correct record.
<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>		
<b>INTO GCU: CHANGE OF PROGRAMME TITLES</b> ( <i>Arising on 16.008</i> )		
16.045	Reported	By Ms Main that the titles are in use and were being used when the Committee received the proposal. The approval ratified the current position but it was made clear to INTO that such changes should be ratified by APPC before being enacted.
<b>FITNESS TO PRACTISE POLICY</b> ( <i>Arising on 16.012</i> )		
16.046	Reported	By the Dean SHLS that Senate had approved the FTP Policy subject to further consideration of two points. This had happened and a minor change to include the word "may" in the Appendix 3 detailing conduct that could impact on fitness to practice had been agreed and this would be reported back to the next meeting of Senate.

<b>NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2016</b> ( <i>Arising on 16.019</i> )		
16.047	Reported	By the Chair that all of the points made by the Committee had been picked up by the Student Experience Steering Group. Action plans were not available as yet but members should note that each programme would have its own action plan in addition to the School and University level action plans.
<b>QUALITY ENHANCEMENT AND ASSURANCE HANDBOOK</b> ( <i>Arising on 16.030</i> )		
16.048	Reported	By the Chair that Senate had approved the handbook recognising some minor amendments may be made following further consultation. Any further changes will be submitted to Senate.
16.049	Reported	By Mr Stewart that the further discussions mentioned in the minute had taken place and working groups had been established.
<b>REPORT ON NON-QUORATE ASSESSMENT BOARDS 2015/16</b>		
16.050	Considered	A report on Non-Quorate Assessment boards in 2015/16 (APC16/13/1).
16.051	Reported	By Mr Lopez that following the review of the 2014-15 session the number of inquorate Boards had dropped from 30 to 15. The improvement was encouraging but it was clear that further progress was required.
16.052	Discussion	Members agreed that further work was required to ensure that inquorate Boards became an exceptional occurrence. It was noted that one Board appeared three times so specific action could be taken to address the particular issues relating to that Board.  Members agreed that it was important to ensure that relevant staff was attending Assessment Boards and that memberships were correct and up to date.
16.053	Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That there is ongoing review of memberships of Boards to ensure that they are accurate (<b>Action: ADLTQs</b>).</li> <li>2. That there is clarification regarding the non-quorate requirements met for SEBE programmes (<b>Action: ADLTQ SEBE/Academic Registrar</b>).</li> <li>3. That Deans should be added to the list of those informed when there is an inquorate Board (<b>Action: Academic Registrar</b>).</li> </ol>
<b>ACADEMIC PILLARS WORKING GROUPS REPORT: CREDIT RATING OF MODULES AND MODULE CONTACT HOURS</b>		
16.054	Considered	Academic Pillars Working Groups Report: Credit Rating of Modules and Module Contact Hours (APC16/14/1).
16.055	Reported	By the Chair that there had been work undertaken related to the academic pillars during last session and attempts to regularise the composition of programme structure including standard module sizes at undergraduate level and postgraduate level. A consultation had found a mix of module sizes with the majority being 20/15 at undergraduate and 20/15 at postgraduate levels. A working group had been convened to address this issue.
16.056	Reported	By Professor Andrew that the report reflected the work of two working groups, one addressing Credit Rating of Modules and one addressing Module Contact

		<p>Hours.</p> <p>The recommendations relating to Credit Rating of Modules were to standardise 20 credit modules with a 40 credit dissertation and project module for undergraduate programmes and 15 credit modules with a 60 credit dissertation/project module for postgraduate programmes. Under exceptional circumstances there would be some flexibility to vary from the standard but an enhanced approval process would be put in place to mitigate the risk of conflict with the University's Assessment Regulations.</p>
16.057	Discussion	<p>Members were in agreement about reinstating University- wide standard module sizes but were interested to know where a rationale would be required for non-standard modules. For example: would this apply to sandwich programmes? It was clarified that it was intended to apply to all programmes.</p> <p>Members also noted that there was an extensive range of variations included in the text. Professor Andrew explained that it reflected the full range of module sizes noted in the GCU Qualifications Framework. Members were not supportive of a large range of options being allowed normally.</p> <p>Members discussed the standard proposals and agreed that the important point was to re-establish a standard module size in line with the sector.</p> <p>Another member asked if the standardisation would be extended to assessment loading. It was agreed that there was a variance in practice across the University and this would be subject to further investigation and enhanced guidance.</p> <p>It was noted that standardisation could have impacts in other areas such as increasing the number of modules and thereby impacting on timetabling.</p> <p>There was general support for standard 15 credits at postgraduate level as a model, and 20 credits at undergraduate level. Members discussed that variations would be by exception and presented at approval events.</p>
16.058	Resolved	<p>That in relation to credit rating of modules:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is communication to all schools regarding module credit and the notional student effort associated with that credit.</li> <li>2. Half modules be avoided wherever possible due to previous work identifying significant assessment loading.</li> <li>3. That the 20 (undergraduate) 15 (postgraduate) model is approved and introduced incrementally.</li> <li>4. There will be a review of use of 10 credits across University.</li> <li>5. There is further review of assessment loading guidance previously approved by Senate.</li> <li>6. The list of acceptable module credit ratings is not used in the regulatory text.</li> <li>7. That SCQF terminology is used throughout the regulatory text.</li> </ol> <p><b>(Actions: Academic Quality and Development)</b></p>
16.059	Reported	<p>By Professor Andrew that in relation to module contact hours, the group had discovered a range of understanding throughout the University. Therefore a standard minimum range should be applied.</p>
16.060	Discussion	<p>Members were unsure about the meaning of the ranges as set out.</p>

		<p>The Chair informed members that variation of practice had been discovered between and within schools so there was a need to achieve greater clarity and to state the universities expectations in relation to providing an excellent student experience. Members discussed expectations of a full time student. When the university modularised the expectation was 18 hours per week in first and second year but there was variance in practice. Students need to understand that each 20 credit module requires 200 hours of notional student effort in order to achieve the learning outcomes. There is the expectation of greater supported learning in the first year (at undergraduate) moving towards more independent learning in later years. One issue to consider was that the first year could be at levels 2 or 3 for direct entry students.</p> <p>Members welcomed the opportunity for greater clarity and also to re-define what “contact” means.</p>
16.061	Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That there is a standard University definition of contact based on the contemporary definitions set out in the report.</li> <li>2. At undergraduate level module contact hours should be standardised and the level of study taken into account, including where the “first” year is at level 2 or 3 for direct entry students.</li> <li>3. The standard contact hours for a first year student be set at 6 hours on average but no less than 4 hours per 20 credit module per week, reflecting specific disciplines.</li> <li>4. That the standard contact hours be adjusted towards increasing independent learning over the four years of an Honours programme reflecting a pedagogical approach that aims to develop deep, independent learners.</li> <li>5. That programme approval documentation is required to define cohorts, including where programmes are 1+3 or 2+2.</li> <li>6. That there be enough flexibility to allow for greater than the minimum. <b>(Actions: Academic Quality and Development)</b></li> </ol>
<b>ELECTRONIC MANAGEMENT OF ASSESSMENT (EMA)</b>		
16.062	Considered	An overview of Electronic Management of Assessment (EMA) (APC16/15/1).
16.063	Reported	By Ms MacNeill that she welcomed general comments and feedback on the timeline presented.
16.064	Discussion	<p>Members asked what the implications would be for archiving. Ms MacNeill replied that it would have to be taken into account and there were differing requirements based on Professional Bodies requirements.</p> <p>Members were concerned that the progress towards EMA was resourced properly. Members were informed that the Digital Capabilities survey would provide important information in terms of what is required on a technical level and therefore members were made aware that the timeline presented was very draft at this stage, and would be adjusted in the light of survey outputs.</p>
16.065	Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the direction of travel be endorsed.</li> <li>2. That the provisional timeline be amended, subject to the outcomes of the Digital Capabilities survey.</li> <li>3. That a set of FAQs be developed. <b>(Action: Academic Quality and Development/S.MacNeill)</b></li> </ol>

<b>GCU LEARNING ANALYTICS UPDATE</b>		
16.066	Considered	An update on GCU Learning Analytics (APC16/16/1).
16.067	Reported	By Ms MacNeill that the support of APPC was being sought for joining the Jisc <i>Effective Learning Analytics</i> Programme. There were no upfront costs associated with participation. This would allow early access to a Blackboard analytics plug in.
16.068	Discussion	<p>Members asked if there would be subsequent costs attached to participation. Ms MacNeill stated that this was possible although it was not yet clear how JISC would make the plug in more widely available.</p> <p>Members were concerned that the data processing agreement complied with University's information governance policies and legal obligations under the DPA. Ms MacNeill stated that any data used would be historical and would not have any impact on current students.</p> <p>Members were insistent that the advice of the Head of Information Compliance must be sought in the development of any agreement and that the University's data compliance obligations must not be compromised.</p>
16.069	Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That members provide feedback to Ms MacNeill on the draft Learning Analytics policy.</li> <li>2. That participation in the Jisc Effective Learning Analytics Programme is supported subject to the satisfaction of University's data protection obligations and consultation with the Head of Information Governance <b>(Action: AQ&amp;D/S.MacNeill)</b> .</li> <li>3. That the options are kept under review pending decisions relating to the new Student Record System and potential compatibility issues.</li> </ol>
<b>AMENDMENT TO STRATEGY FOR LEARNING: COMMON GOOD ATTRIBUTES</b>		
16.070	Considered	An amendment to the Strategy for Learning related to Common Good Attributes (APC16/17/1).
16.071	Reported	By Professor Whittaker that the update was simply to include reference to Common Good Attributes in the <i>Strategy for Learning</i> text.
16.072	Resolved	That the revisions be approved.
<b>UPDATE ON COMMON GOOD CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT</b>		
16.073	Considered	An update on Common Good Curriculum development (APC16/18/1).
16.074	Reported	By Professor Whittaker that the paper was an update on the development of the <i>Common Good Curriculum</i> . She asked members to note that the Common Good attributes had now replaced the graduate attributes and were embedded in the Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook and the updated Strategy for Learning. A process of raising awareness would be implemented and identification of ways common good attributes could be embedded within the taught curriculum. A number of next steps had been agreed including the Common Good award and the Common Good website was now live.
16.075	Resolved	That the update be noted.
<b>SENATE DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE – ACADEMIC STANDARDS ISSUES</b>		
16.076	Considered	A report on academic standards issues arising from a Senate Disciplinary

		Committee case (APC16/25/1).
16.077	Reported	By Ms Donnet that the paper defined a set of circumstances (now resolved) that had been revealed during a disciplinary investigation. There were implications for academic standards and these were set out for consideration by APPC:  1) Whether the reproduction of model answers in an exam should be considered as plagiarism and dealt with as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. 2) What additional action should be taken to ensure that a similar situation could not arise in the future?
16.078	Discussion	Members questioned the wisdom of providing model answers particularly where assessments may have insufficiently varied answers. On the question of reproducing a model answer in an examination, members were in agreement that this should be considered as plagiarism. To avoid confusion students should be made aware that model answer reproduction in an examination will be treated as plagiarism.
16.079	Resolved	1. That where model answers must be used it is made clear to students that reproduction of the model answer in any assessment will be treated as plagiarism. <b>(Action: ADLTQs)</b> 2. That it be made explicit in the Code of Student Conduct that reproduction of the model answer in any assessment will be treated as plagiarism. <b>(Action: Department of Governance)</b> 3. Schools to ensure questions and model answers are not used in current assessments <b>(Action: ADLTQs)</b> .
<b>PORTFOLIO REVIEW</b>		
16.080	Considered	<b>SHLS Portfolio Review Implementation (APC16/12/01)</b>
16.081	Reported	Mr McKay presented the key elements of the paper then welcomed comments on the proposal and would answer any questions from members.
16.082	Discussion	One member asked if there was an academic rationale for the proposals, particularly in relation to the discontinuation of the BSc Operating Department Practice.  Mr McKay responded that he believed that the academic case was made in the proposal paper and specified that for this programme:  1. There was no research activity or contribution to research activity; 2. That there was no demand for development to an Honours programme; 3. That there was no prospect of linkage to the postgraduate portfolio; 4. That there were differing NHS priorities which affected this subject area (members were alerted that a further intake would take place in September 2017 to allow time for NHS and Scottish Government to consider a revised 'Theatre Plan' review of NHS theatre services).  He added that the decision to discontinue was not based on financial concerns as the programme was economically viable.
16.083	Discussion	The Student President set out the position from GCUSA in regard to all of the portfolio proposals:

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the strategy to refocus on high SFC price band programmes was risky particularly as HLS could not achieve its targets;</li> <li>2. That there were potential staff redundancies as a result of these proposals;</li> <li>3. That the changes would impact on students and the student experience;</li> <li>4. That it was not clear that quality procedures had been followed in all respects.</li> </ol>
16.084	Reported	<p>By Mr McKay that he accepted the point that there would be implications for staff in the future and for students but otherwise disagreed with the statements. The University's procedures for programme withdrawal had been followed as set out in the Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook. The strategy to reprofile the University portfolio across price bands had been ongoing for several years following an unplanned growth in lower price bands in one school. Mr McKay stated he did not understand the comment regarding the school being unable to meet target as most of its health programmes were selectors rather than recruiters and he did not agree that it was a risky strategy. He informed members that there had been difficult conversations with the ODP staff and with the ODP students and he was aware that there was dissension from the School's proposal. He stated that it was right that the opposing views should be heard and given consideration as part of the process ahead of the final decisions.</p>
16.085	Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the SHLS portfolio review proposal is approved by a majority of APPC;</li> <li>2. That the concerns of some members surrounding the impact on staff and students in relation to the withdrawal of BSc Operating Department Practice be noted;</li> </ol>
16.086	Considered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. GSBS Portfolio 2020 Withdrawal of Programmes (APC16/19/1)</b></li> <li><b>2. GSBS Portfolio 2020 Suspension of Programmes (APC16/20/1)</b></li> </ol>
16.087	Reported	<p>By Professor Hilton that she echoed Mr McKay's statements with regard to due process and stated that the proposals were aimed at the sustainability of the portfolio. The withdrawals were programmes/programme pathways which were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Not recruiting;</li> <li>b) Recruiting only small numbers of students.</li> </ol> <p>As well as the sustainability issue with these programmes/pathways, there was a need to recognise that very small cohorts were not conducive to a good student experience.</p> <p>Professor Hilton added that the review aimed to: reduce the complexity of the portfolio; enhance the academic coherence of the portfolio allied to the School's research strengths; enhance recruitment to postgraduate programmes: refocus on international recruitment, to align with the University's Common Good curriculum; and to prioritise distinctiveness in the School's portfolio.</p>
16.088	Reported	<p>By the Chair that part of the background to the proposals for GSBS was that, due to a sudden increase in their student numbers at level 1 and articulating at level 3, the University balance in the portfolio has shifted. This presented challenges for the University, the school staff and students. The reprofiling of student numbers and price groups had been ongoing for the last 3 years and was necessary to provide a more coherent and distinctive portfolio.</p>
16.089	Discussion	<p>One member stated that the rationale for these changes was based on funding rationale and not on an academic rationale. It was pointed out that the BA Economic and Law/Risk/Finance Programme Board was unanimous in its</p>

		<p>opposition to the proposals and opposition was expressed by the Programme Boards for BA (Hons) International Business, BA (Hons) Risk and Law, and MA in Creative and Cultural Business. In addition it was not clear that there would be no resource implications, as stated in the paper's front cover, given the scale of the proposals. A much more robust case for these proposals was required before any further action was taken.</p> <p>Another member agreed with this position, raising matters not under discussion in the paper, and felt that the GSBS proposals should be revised and resubmitted before further action.</p> <p>The Chair stated the role of APPC was to consider the academic case when presented but also the academic coherence and sustainability of the broader University portfolio, and that the rationale for portfolio change could be instigated on many different grounds e.g. academic, financial, sustainability, coherence, external drivers etc. She also pointed out that the Programme Boards, with the exception of the BA Economic and Law/Risk/Finance Programme Board, had supported the proposed changes. She stated that there was a need to recognise that there had been a lot of change in GSBS for both staff and students but equally it was necessary to work towards greater sustainability and coherence of the portfolio and also address the high student-staff ratios affecting some areas of provision.</p> <p>Professor Hilton responded that she felt that there was a strong case set out based on KPIs, distinctiveness, size and scale. She agreed there was an imperative to reduce student intake at level 1 and she felt that this case achieved this aim whilst providing greater portfolio coherence and distinctiveness. In response to another query, Professor Hilton clarified that there was no proposal to suspend the LLB programme.</p> <p>The Chair asked Professor Hilton if there would still be economics provision in the GSBS portfolio.</p> <p>Professor Hilton replied that there would be economics provision as a supporting subject for programmes within the portfolio. She also stated that she did not believe that there was a risk of staff redundancies arising from these proposals. The Chair asked that the minute reflect the majority of APPC members endorsed the recommendation to Senate. The minority not in favour were noted.</p>
16.090	Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the GSBS portfolio review proposal is approved by a majority of APPC;</li> <li>2. That the proposed interim suspension of recruitment to affected programmes as recommended by the Portfolio 2020 group is approved by a majority of APPC;</li> <li>3. That it be noted that some members did not believe the portfolio review case presented by GSBS was sufficiently robust in all aspects;</li> </ol>
16.091	Considered	<b>SEBE Framework for a CCIS Undergraduate Portfolio For 2020 (APC16/26/1)</b>
16.092	Reported	<p>By Professor Buggy that the proposals all came from Computer Communications and Interactive Systems (CCIS). He hoped the academic rationale was clear from the paper.</p> <p>The withdrawal of the BA (Hons) Interior Design was relatively straight forward in that the programme was wholly delivered by City of Glasgow College and there was no expertise within CCIS or SEBE that could contribute to the programme. It was therefore anomalous within the portfolio. In addition the programme had returned</p>

		<p>very poor student satisfaction, limited demand and poor graduate employment. He confirmed students on the college HND could and did apply to a number of articulation routes not just this one.</p> <p>The phasing out of levels 1 and 2 of the Digital Design Suite and redirecting of academic expertise to create enhanced offerings at levels 3 and 4, together with new advanced provision at level M was reflective of in-depth consultation with students and graduates and where feedback suggested that the content students found most relevant was in the later years. The current programme lacked the specialism and distinctiveness students were seeking.</p> <p>The BSc/BSc (Hons) Computer Games (Art and Animation) pathway, having previously been proposed for removal, was instead to be revised to integrate more closely with the Computer Games suite, redesigning the offer to enhance what had been a poor student experience for some students.</p>
16.093	Discussion	Professor Buggy was asked if the proposals had addressed the concerns of the staff evidenced in the DDT Programme Board minute. Professor Buggy stated that a compromise position proposed by the Programme Board had been adopted by the School Board and the final proposals reflected this position.
16.094	Resolved	That the SEBE portfolio review proposals be approved.
16.095	Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Portfolio Review changes presented be recommended to Senate.</li> <li>2. That the procedures for Communicating Programme Changes (specified in the Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook) be implemented.</li> <li>3. Admissions and marketing be notified and measures agreed regarding supporting prospective students implemented.</li> </ol>
<b>SEBE – MSC ELECTRICAL POWER ENGINEERING ACADEMIC CASE</b>		
16.096	Received	An academic case for a programme MSc Electrical Power Engineering (APC16/23/1).
16.097	Reported	<p>By Professor McMeekin that in recent years there had been an increase in the provision of MEng degrees and GCU already offered one in this subject area. However there was no pathway available to prospective part-time students or students looking for a standalone Masters. In SEBE there was similar MEng/MSc pathway availability and feedback suggested there was also demand in this subject area.</p> <p>Professor McMeekin stated that the concept paper for this proposal had mentioned a 2 year programme but the School were not ready to pursue that at the moment.</p>
16.098	Approved	The academic case for the MSc Electrical Power Engineering programme (APC16/23/1).
<b>GSBS – CONCEPT PAPER MSC INTERNATIONAL TOURISM &amp; EVENTS MANAGEMENT</b>		
16.099	Considered	Concept Paper: MSc International Tourism and Events Management (APC16/22/1).
16.100	Reported	By Dr Rate that the proposal was to consolidate 3 programme pathways into one, one of which had already been discontinued due to lack of demand. The intention was to create a more marketable programme building on current strengths.
16.101	Approved	The Concept Paper: MSc International Tourism and Events Management (APC16/22/1).

<b>SHLS – DOCTORAL FRAMEWORK IN PSYCHOLOGY ACADEMIC CASE</b>		
16.102	Considered	Academic case for a Doctoral Framework in Applied Health and Wellbeing Psychology (APC16/24/1).
16.103	Reported	By Dr McPherson that the framework was intended to provide a stepladder from undergraduate level right through to doctoral level in this subject area.
16.104	Approved	<p>The Academic case for a Doctoral Framework in Applied Health and Wellbeing Psychology (APC16/24/1) with the following comments to be considered by the programme development team in preparing programme approval documentation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To use <i>phase</i> instead of <i>stage</i> in describing the programme levels;</li> <li>2. To clarify transition points and exit points, including where the transition point is in relation to professional body registration (i.e. 1 is BPS, 2 is HCPC).</li> <li>3. To create a diagrammatic representation of the programme</li> </ol> <p><b>(Action: Doctoral Framework in Applied Health and Wellbeing Psychology Development Team)</b></p>
<b>LEARNING AND TEACHING SUBCOMMITTEE</b>		
16.105	Approved	Changes to the Terms of Reference and Composition and Membership 2016-17 (APC16/21/1) subject to making clear that the GCU London representative is intended to be an ADLTQ equivalent (e.g. Learning Teaching and Quality Lead). <b>(Action: Department of Governance)</b>
16.106	Approved	The Learning and Teaching Subcommittee Annual Report 2015-16 (LTSC16/1/2).
16.107	Received	Confirmed minutes of the meeting of LTSC held on 22 June 2016 (LTSC15/74/1).

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