



Meeting APPC17/3
Confirmed

ACADEMIC POLICY AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2018

PRESENT:	Professor N. Andrew, Professor A. Britton, Professor I. Cameron, Dr D. Chalmers, Dr C. Choromides (<i>vice</i> Mrs M. Wright), Professor R. Clougherty, Mr K.Campbell, Ms J. Fisher, Professor T. Hilton, Ms C. Hulsen, Mr S. Lopez, Ms J. Main, Mr V. McKay, Dr N. McLarnon, Ms Y. Ogedengbe, Dr T. Peshken (<i>vice</i> Professor A. Morgan), Dr S. Rate, Mr R. Ruthven, Professor B. Steves, Mr I. Stewart, Professor V. Webster (Chair), Professor R. Whittaker (<i>vice</i> Chair)	
BY INVITATION:	Ms H. Brown, Ms D.Donnet (Governance)	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr P. Woods (Secretary)	
Note by Committee Secretary: the meeting commenced being chaired by the vice Chair		
MINUTES		
017.083	Considered	Unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2017 (APPC17/27/01).
017.084	Resolved	That the minutes be approved as a correct record.
MATTERS ARISING		
Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook: Graduate/Degree Apprenticeships (arising on 017.060)		
017.085	Reported	By the Vice Chair that the inclusion of the GA/DA Principles in the Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook had been approved by Senate.
Report on Assessment Boards 2016-17 (arising on 017.064)		
017.086	Reported	By the Vice Chair that AQD had set up 3 working groups, including one reviewing policy and procedure for external examining. These were: 1. external examiners; 2. Annual programme monitoring; 3. Quality Enhancement and Assurance Handbook
017.087	Reported	By Ms Donnet that there was a MITs Working Group which would report back to APPC.
Outcome Agreement (arising on 017.068)		

017.088	Reported	By Ms Hulsen that there was ongoing discussion with SFC and indicative numbers were required in relation to priority outcomes. It was likely there would be increased pressure on the share of Widening Access and Retention Fund (WARF) as more institutions competed for this funding. In terms of subject area focus, the nursing subject area would be the main focus for GCU.
Contextualised Admissions Policy (arising on 017.072)		
017.089	Reported	By Ms Fisher that the action relating to minimum entry tariffs was proving problematic as there was a lack of certainty about what this means.
017.090	Resolved	That a definition be agreed (Action: DVC/Admissions/AQD/ADLTQs).
ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS WORKING GROUP		
017.091	Considered	A report from the Assessment Regulations Working Group (APPC17/28/01)
017.092	Reported	By Mr McKay that each section would be addressed in turn.
Threshold Minimum marks		
017.093	Reported	By Mr McKay that the following options were presented for APPC's consideration: Option 1 - Information Services (IS) to investigate development of a script within the current MIS system, to implement threshold minima for each element of assessment. This is theoretically possible but IS would need to test it to ensure no impact on historical module data calculations and/or system rules which govern classification and compensation calculations. The script would be applied to SCQF Level 7 and Level 11 modules from September 2018, and incrementally thereafter to achieve steady state (SCQF Level 8 from September 2019 and so on). This option would not require additional module codes to be generated. Option 2 - Should testing of Option 1 identify issues with assuring the integrity of historical data for current modules, the option of Schools creating new module codes to add threshold minimum marks would need to be explored, following due process for the creation and approval of new module descriptors as appropriate.
017.094	Discussion	Members noted difficulties with both options. There was concern that option 1 may not be technically feasible and even if it was it could be prone to potential errors. Option 2 was also difficult in the context of the current system quality assurance procedures. Another member asked if the graduate diploma regulations would stay as is. Mr McKay stated that this was a possibility but would be considered further. Another member requested that the normalisation formula used in previous versions of the regulations is included in the next version.
017.095	Resolved	That minimum marks be introduced for new students only with new module codes for changed modules subject to confirmation that major module change workflow in ISIS can be bypassed from a technical perspective (Action: Academic Registrar to check technical feasibility).

Generic Award Titles		
017.096	Reported	By Mr McKay that feedback from School Boards was being collated by Academic Quality and Development and would be confirmed titles would be presented to the next meeting.
Extra Time for International Students		
017.097	Reported	By Mr McKay that it had been proposed that the policy be introduced due to developments in the sector. A review of sector practice revealed that only 1 institution (of 27 consulted) have such a policy. It was therefore recommended that the status quo is maintained and support for students is enabled elsewhere e.g. through embedded session and LDCs.
017.098	Resolved	That the status quo be maintained
Operations of Assessment Boards		
017.099	Reported	By Mr Lopez that GCU was in a minority of HEIs who read out all candidates' names and results. The proposal was to accept all students who have a recommended pass/proceed decision code (C class FRP) as given, without the need to read out the result of each individual student. All students must have been considered on an individual basis at a Pre-Board and the Programme Leader must confirm to the Assessment Board that this has taken place. Where a student has not been considered in this manner at a pre-board then they must be presented in an individual manner at the main board meeting. All profiles being presented at an Assessment Board must be physically presented at the meeting. Any member of the Assessment Board may request that a student, whose decision is due to be presented as tabled, to be considered on an individual basis.
017.100	Discussion	<p>Some concerns were voiced in relation to complex cases e.g. distinction/merit. Mr McKay responded that the flexibility to raise individual cases aimed to cover the concerns raised here. Mr Lopez informed members that he did not think there was a risk to the functioning of the Boards due the safeguards allowing flexibility for individual cases. The only change would be that all names are not read out.</p> <p>Members asked if there would be formal terms of reference for pre-Boards and Mr McKay replied that this would be the case.</p> <p>Members asked if module performance would be reviewed and it was stated that this would be part of the pre-Board remit.</p> <p>One member asked if there was a possibility to reduce the number of Boards but other members felt that composite Boards had led to some of the issues so it was not advisable to compress further.</p>
017.101	Resolved	That the proposals be approved a recommended to Senate.
Policy on Project and Dissertation Supervision		
017.102	Reported	By Mr McKay that the aim had been to strengthen roles and responsibilities and record supervision that should be happening.
017.103	Discussion	6.1 – members asked if answering emails within a working week was too

		<p>long for a response. It was generally thought not as there needed to be time to consider the response for it to be made appropriately.</p> <p>It was clarified that academic advisors had no role specifically in dissertation/project supervision.</p> <p>Other members focused on the 4 hours contact and asked if this was a realistic estimate. Mr Stewart replied that the estimate did not count e.g. lab contact. Other members suggested 6 hours may be too much multiplied over a number students being supervised. Nevertheless the general feeling was that 4 hours is not realistic in terms of time being devoted at the moment and that this should be considered further.</p>
017.104	Resolved	That the proposal is withdrawn at this stage for further discussion on appropriate contact time (Action: ARWG).
Assessment Preparation Guidance for Academic Staff		
017.105	Reported	By Mr Stewart that the guidance had been assembled over time and a refresh was required taking digital assessment into account. The main changes were to simplify overall, clarify that feedback is not unfairly “helping” students, update suggested duration of examinations and introduce a word limit for coursework assessments. There was explicit reference to <i>bad</i> practice such as numerous “mini” assessments presented as one assessment and <i>good</i> practice such as portfolio work. There was also added guidance on oral assessments.
017.106	Discussion	Members felt that it may be more relevant to include the word limit in the assessment regulations document(s). It should be clearly stated in the guidance to both staff and students.
017.107	Resolved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Signpost existing <i>Digital Assessment Policy</i> in this guidance ii. Change word “count” to word “limit” iii. Include a note to ensure word limit guidance is also included in student handbooks iv. Assessment loading guidance remains as guidance not policy <p>(Action: ARWG)</p>
Applicability of Assessment Regulations for non-standard start dates		
017.108	Reported	By Mr McKay that the Assessment Regulations themselves were not an issue but there was an issue regarding timing of assessment boards and resit assessments
017.109	Resolved	That the applicability of timing in these areas be reviewed. (Action: ARWG)
Current Honours Classification and profiling regulations		
017.110	Reported	By Mr McKay that a short life working group had confirmed that the current regulations were clear and fit for purpose but recommended the inclusion of the examples used in previous versions of the regulations. AQD would also contact Programme Boards to confirm existing exceptions and whether or not these provide sufficient detail regarding the alternative classification/profiling being used.
017.111	Discussion	There was a brief discussion regarding the 3% boundary for profiling and

		whether this was too generous. It was agreed that any change to this policy would require careful review and modelling.
017.112	Resolved	That the recommendations be approved: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minor textual updates to Section 19 of the Undergraduate Assessment Regulations (Appendix 7a) including the addition of the 'Examples of Compensation, Merit, Distinction and Honours Profiling' and minor changes to the Exceptions Committee form (Appendix 7b) 2. All Programme Boards be contacted to confirm any exceptions to standard regulations and to ensure that these provide sufficient detail with respect to the classification and profiling mechanisms in force. (Action: ARWG/AQD)
TERMINOLOGY FOR PROGRAMMES PROGRESSING THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY APPROVAL AND REVIEW CYCLE		
017.113	Considered	A proposal to consider the introduction of an interim (second stage) phrase to replace 'subject to approval' (APPC17/31/01).
017.114	Reported	By Professor Andrew that the proposal was to consider the introduction of an interim (second stage) phrase to replace 'subject to approval'
017.115	Resolved	That the proposal be approved.
PROGRESSION AND COMPLETION REPORT		
017.116	Considered	An overview of 2016-17 progression and completion for students undertaking undergraduate programmes and full-time postgraduate taught programmes at GCU (APPC17/30/01).
017.117	Reported	By Ms Hulsen that there were a couple of typographical errors in this version which would be corrected for the SharePoint file. The overview was also available on GCU Dash.
017.118	Discussion	It was noted that 2 year Masters programmes were not yet included in the summary report. It was further noted that there was action ongoing to investigate the issues raised by the report. SEBE were focusing on levels 2 and 4 via a task and finish group.
017.119	Resolved	That: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. That the paper is updated to remove 2 errors(Action: S&P) ii. Schools to investigate levels where decrease in progression/award (Action: Deans/ADLTQs)
SWBE –ACADEMIC CASE BA (HONS) APPLIED BUSINESS MANAGEMENT		
017.120	Considered	An academic case for BA (Hons) Applied Business Management (fulfilling Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship and Skills Development Scotland Graduate Apprenticeship Framework for Business Management) (APPC17/29/01).
017.121	Reported	By Dr Rate that the proposal was based on the GCU Graduate Apprenticeship

		model in partnership between GSBS, SWBE and GCU London.
017.122	Reported	By Dr Choromides that there were 20 places proposed but there had already been 76 expressions of interest. The programme had great potential to provide access to the English Degree Apprenticeship market.
017.123	Discussion	It was noted that support for these students would be at a distance with periodic campus-based support.
017.124	Resolved	That the Academic Case - BA (Hons) Applied Business Management (fulfilling Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship and Skills Development Scotland Graduate Apprenticeship Framework for Business Management) be approved.
GCNYC – CONCEPT PAPER for MSc FAIR FASHION		
017.125	Considered	A concept paper for MSc Fair Fashion programme (APPC17/33/01)
17.126	Reported	By Professor Clougherty that the proposal gave an opportunity to bring together 3 campuses, New York, Glasgow and London, and was in an area of competitive advantage. There would be a meeting with New York State Education Department to look at possibilities for running the programme in New York but the intention was to approve as a GCU programme regardless of New York status. Further discussion was ongoing regarding the delivery of the programme and this would be clarified in the academic and business case to come to the next meeting.
17.127	Resolved	That the concept paper be approved.