

LEARNING AND TEACHING SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2013

- PRESENT:** Dr B Beggs, Ms D Borrett, Prof L Creanor, Dr B Ellis, Dr M Ferguson, Mr M Jones, Mrs M Kelt, Ms J Main, Ms C Mowatt (vice Ms M Ward), Dr J Nally, Mr U Saleem (PG Student Representative) Ms K Thomson, Ms E Todorova (UG Student Representative), Mr K Ward, Prof R Whittaker (Chair)
- APOLOGIES:** Dr N Andrew, Mr N Dennis, Mrs E Smith, Ms M Ward
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs M Henaghan, Mr A MacKinlay (Secretary), Mrs R McDonald (Acting Centre Director, INTO Scotland)

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed Ms Catriona Mowat (Positive Living and Disability Manager attending for Mrs Margaret Ward), Ms Rhona McDonald (Acting Centre Director of INTO Scotland in place of Mrs Brenda McMahon who was currently on secondment to Malaysia) and Mr Umer Saleem (recently elected Caledonian Student Voice Taught Postgraduate Students' Convenor) to the Committee.

MINUTES

- 12.069 Considered The unconfirmed draft minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee held on 24 October 2012 (Doc LTSC12/23/1).
- 12.070 Resolved That the minutes be approved as a correct record.
(Action: Secretary)

MATTERS ARISING

External Assessors Sub-Committee (arising on 12.027)

- 12.071 Reported By the Chair that a number of meetings had taken place to consider and approve new appointments and extensions/reallocation of duties received from Schools. The membership of the EASC had also been updated and included the appointment of a new chair and additional representation from Schools and the Graduate School. The updated membership would be formally approved at the meeting later on the agenda.

Blended Learning Review (arising on 12.029)

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| 12.072 | Reported | By the Chair that the thematic review of blended learning commissioned by the Committee had now been completed. Final amendments were being made to the report before submission to LTSC for consideration. To prevent a delay until the next meeting, the report would be circulated by email to the Committee for comments in relation to the findings, outcomes and recommendations. This feedback, as well as the report itself, would then be discussed at the April meeting of the Committee. |
| 12.073 | Discussion | The timeframe for the consideration of the report recommendations was queried by the ADLTQ SHLS in relation to if, and how the outcomes, would feed into the feasibility study into a new GCU digital platform currently being undertaken by an external consultant. It was noted that the thematic review was an internal review and for internal stakeholders only, however, to best manage the recommendations and related actions points of the respective internal/external reviews, it was agreed that an assessment, specifically, of the outcomes arising from the blended learning review and where these could potentially have an input to the external feasibility study work, would be appropriately flagged to the external consultant. The Chair agreed to confirm with the external consultant of their deadlines for reporting to the University. |
| 12.074 | Resolved | <p>i. That the report of the thematic review of blended learning be circulated to members for initial consideration and comment in advance of its full consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.
(Action: Secretary)</p> <p>ii. That the Chair confirms with the external consultant their deadlines for reporting to the University with respect to the GCU digital platform review and undertakes an assessment of the outcomes arising from the blended learning review and their potential input to the external feasibility study.
(Action: Chair)</p> |

GCU London: Quality Enhancement Visit (arising on 12.031)

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| 12.075 | Reported | By the Chair that the terms of reference and composition of the GCU London Campus Board had yet to be finalised. Once agreed, the first meeting of the newly constituted Board would take place. |
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Staff Student International Mobility (arising on 12.039)

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| 12.076 | Reported | By the Chair that an update would be covered in the report of items and matters arising from APC on the agenda. |
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Global Perspectives Project on Internationalising the Curriculum at GCU (arising on 12.042)

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| 12.077 | Reported | By the Chair, from an update received from Ms Sabine McKinnon, GCU LEAD and Project Co-ordinator, that phase one activity outlined in the project plan was well underway. Interviews were being carried out with key staff to scope practice in schools and identify key barriers and opportunities. A survey had also been sent out to Programme Leaders and data was currently in the process of being analysed from the responses received to date. Some materials and project outputs to support schools in their portfolio refresh activity including the design of a set of nine principles of an internationalised curriculum and audit tool to audit |
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current provision had been developed and made available to Schools.

Guidelines for the use of social media in learning and teaching (arising on 12.049)

12.078 Reported By Prof Creanor, that the guidelines had been highlighted to staff in the recent blended learning newsletter and a link provided. A new GCU Learn Staff Help Community for blended learning was currently under development and the guidelines would be made available at this site.

Criteria for new Senior Scholar Role (arising on 12.052)

12.079 Reported By Prof Creanor, that the new role would be launched to all staff in February and that she would be having a meeting shortly with the PVC Learning and Teaching to discuss the wider Caledonian Scholar and Associates Scheme.

Student-Led Teaching Awards 2013 (arising on 12.056)

12.080 Reported By Mr K Ward, GCUSA Student Representative Co-ordinator, that the GCUSA had agreed with the suggestion of the Committee and that the awards would be branded as the GCUSA Teaching Awards.

NSS 2012: Students' Association Satisfaction (arising on 12.058)

12.081 Reported By Mr K Ward, that in relation to the survey results around part-time student engagement with the GCUSA, a new part-time students representative would be working with the GCUSA this trimester building on previous research to identify what action to take to improve the 2012 score.

Enterprise Education Sub-Committee (arising on 12.061)

12.082 Reported By the Chair, that the minor revision and update to the composition of the Sub-Committee had been agreed. The VP Education had also been added to the membership in addition to the Scottish Institute of Enterprise (SIE) student representative intern.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE (APC)

12.083 Considered A report of items and matters arising from the meeting of APC held on 5 December 2012 (Doc LTSC12/29/1).

12.084 Reported By the Chair, that at a previous meeting it had been agreed that for future meetings a key highlights paper of APC items would be prepared by the Secretary and provided to the Committee in place of the verbal reporting of items by the Chair.

12.085 Discussion The following specific items were raised by the Committee for discussion:

Student International Mobility

The Chair provided further context to this item having chaired the meeting of APC in the absence of the PVC Learning and Teaching. The proposals outlined in the paper from the Staff Student International Mobility Sub-Committee (SSIMSC) should have been approved by APC but there was no explicit confirmation that there had been any reference to

or alignment with the Internationalisation Strategy recently endorsed by Senate to support the proposals in the paper. For this reason APC were unable to approve the paper without this confirmation. The Chair advised members that she had discussed the points raised around consultation with the Chair of the SSIMSC, and was assured that the proposals were completely consistent with the relevant objectives of the Internationalisation Strategy. The Chair of the SSIMSC had arranged to meet with the PVC International and External Relations to address and close off the issues raised by APC with regards to communication. Following this meeting, Chair's Action on behalf of APC to approve the proposals could be progressed.

Taught Student Attendance Policy

In response to clarification around the scope of the policy, the Director of Student Experience confirmed that the policy would apply to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate students from September 2013. All three Schools had chosen to retain their existing attendance monitoring processes but from the start of the forthcoming academic session, the new electronic attendance and engagement monitoring system would be rolled out across the University. The Head of Student Administration Services (SAS) had led a GCU wide staff workshop to disseminate the key principles and responsibilities of staff and students outlined in the policy. With regards to reporting it was noted that administrative staff only, were being trained how to extract attendance monitoring reports. The Director advised that a workshop had also been held for a number of Programme Leaders who were working with the Head of SAS to provide the relevant academic context to reporting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

12.086 Reported

By the Chair, the following items for the attention of LTSC:

Chair of APC

Professor John Wilson, the new PVC Learning and teaching, would now assume the role of Chair of APC having taken over executive responsibility for learning and teaching from Professor Mannion following a reallocation of Executive Board responsibilities. Professor Wilson would be working closely with the Committee, GCU LEAD and Schools and in the immediate future would be spearheading the new LTAS developments.

SFC Outcome Agreement

The University was at the final stages of finalising the SFC Outcome Agreement for 2013/14. The draft agreement, which set out high level objectives around widening participation, articulation, teaching excellence, research and knowledge transfer, would be considered by Executive Board on 25 January 2013 and thereafter through the relevant academic committee structures.

GCU LTAS

The LTAS development day had taken place in November 2012 and had produced a way forward and vision of where the University should be focussed. This had been agreed with the PVC Learning and Teaching.

Following the recent change of PVC Learning and Teaching, the Chair had met with the PVC to discuss progress on the LTAS developments and a slightly different focus and approach had now to be tabled. Despite the slight change in focus, which would require further discussion with stakeholders, the original timescales for approving the strategy would remain. In the next few weeks, the Chair would be establishing key groups to discuss the revised focus and elements.

Curriculum for Excellence

The working group had now been established to consider the impact of the Curriculum for Excellence guidance and policy, in advance of implementation in 2015/16, specifically around the University's admissions process, student learning and LTAS.

Programme Leader's Away Day

The Programme Leader's Away Day had taken place on 11 January 2013. Feedback from the University wide event had been positive.

Student Experience Summit

The Student Experience Summit had taken place on 16 January 2013. The summit was based around appreciative enquiry and had been a lively experience for those attending. The Director of Student Experience reported that there were number of outputs from the summit and in keeping with the spirit of the event, these have been captured in a creative way, in particular, a 'river' which represented the student journey and distilled into key themes. The Director wished to thank Mr Eddie Horn from the School of Engineering and Built Environment for his technical support. A survey had been set-up via Survey Monkey for feedback and a meeting of the organisation group had taken place after the summit to consider the next steps. The Director emphasised that the summit was not a one off event but rather part of the on-going journey in the development of the University's Student Experience Framework.

Portfolio Refresh

Schools would be due to report their outcomes to Executive Board at the end of January.

Academic Year Change Review

A working group, chaired by the PVC Learning and Teaching had recently been established to consider proposed changes to the academic year for implementation from 2013/14. To inform the initial work of the group, the Director of Student Experience reported that a questionnaire had recently been circulated by the Head of Student Administration Services to key senior staff for dissemination across Schools and support departments and services, for their comments on any proposed changes.

ENHANCEMENT LED INTERNAL SUBJECT REVIEW (ELISR): GLASGOW SCHOOL FOR BUSINESS AND SOCIETY – DEPARTMENT OF LAW, ECONOMICS, ACCOUNTANCY AND RISK (LEAR)

12.087	Considered	The report of the Enhancement Led Internal Subject Review of the Department of Law, Economics, Accountancy and Risk (LEAR) of the
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Glasgow School for Business and Society held on 19-20 June 2012 and the School's action plan response (Doc LTSC12/24/1).

- 12.088 Reported By the Chair, that the report had been approved by the Chair of the Review Panel and Panel Members and that the School's action plan responses had been accepted and signed off by the Chair of the Review Panel in line with the ELISR process.
- 12.089 Reported By Mrs M Henaghan, Assistant Head (Quality Enhancement and Academic Governance), (QE&AG), that the first area of practice to be enhanced, a review of the School's staff workload model was a common theme across a number of ELISR reports. Schools could not really forge ahead on this action pending further University level discussions with the Trade Unions and JCC. With this context, the action plan response to this specific outcome was accepted.
- 12.090 Discussion In terms of the ELISR process and outcomes generally, it was noted that the commitment for Schools to engage with the relevant departments and support services in formalising relevant action plan responses could be strengthened. It was suggested that additional guidance could also be developed and provided to Schools on how best to frame their measurable outcomes in response to areas of practice for enhancement, to ensure focus and avoidance of vagueness and to allow the Committee to make clear judgements on responses. These points would be taken forward by the Assistant Head (QE&AG) as part of the working group review of the ELISR process currently underway.

The Committee considered the three areas of University-wide practice that could be enhanced outlined in the report.

Quality assurance and enhancement (QAE) procedures in relation to the new School structures

The basis of this outcome was slightly unclear. All QAE processes in the current version of the handbook remained extant and Schools should be operating to these. The ADLTQ (SHLS) reported that whilst Schools were operating to the extant procedures, overall, School governance arrangements for QAE needed to be better clarified. The Assistant Head (QE&AG) advised that the GCU Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook was currently under review and that a revised handbook would be approved for implementation from the start of the 2013/14 session.

The role of programme and subject (group) leads

The requirement for clearer guidance around the two roles was supported by the Committee. The QAE Handbook provided a role description for a Programme Leader but no role description existed for a Subject (Group) Lead. It was acknowledged that practice in both roles varied across the University and consistency was required. There needed to be clarity around expectations and defined parameters for the roles, in particular, the Subject (Group) Lead, as it related to the enhancement of the student experience, opportunities for career progression and any expectations around line management responsibilities. It was noted that some of the points raised by the Committee were most probably out-with the remit of the Committee's terms of reference for deliberation and that these should be flagged to the appropriate directorate/department to consider.

ELISR process

The Assistant Head (QE&AG) advised that the review of the process was now underway. A working group had been established and chaired by the ADLTQ (GSBS) as noted earlier in the meeting.

- 12.091 Resolved
- i. That the report and action plan response be approved.
 - ii. That the report and action plan response be recommended to APC for approval.
(Action: Secretary)
 - iii. That the points raised by the Committee in relation to programme and subject (group) leads be flagged to the appropriate directorate/department to consider.
(Action: Secretary)

ENHANCEMENT LED INTERNAL SUBJECT REVIEW (ELISR): SCHOOL OF BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT – YEAR ON PROGRESS REPORT

- 12.092 Considered A year on progress report on the action plan responses to the outcomes and areas for enhancement arising from the Enhancement Led Internal Subject Review of the School of Built and Natural Environment held 23-24 March 2011 (Doc LTSC12/25/1).
- 12.093 Discussion In parallel to the point raised during the consideration of the LEAR report and in particular, the sufficiency of the measurable outcome responses, a member felt that the responses on progress to date were slightly vague at points and did not match up with the relevant measurable outcome. The Assistant Head (QE&AG) advised that there had been frank and detailed discussion at the year on progress meeting and perhaps the progress to date statements had been over summarised. It was also noted that if the original objectives were not as well articulated then it could be harder to form a clear and meaningful response. It was suggested that the review of the process needed to define ways to capture stronger impact statements in the review report, action plan response and year on report.
- 12.094 Resolved That the year on progress report be noted and the points raised regarding the process be taken forward to the working group established to review the ELISR process.
(Action: AH (QE&AG))

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) UPDATE REPORT

- 12.095 Considered An update report from GCU LEAD on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) developments across the University (Doc LTSC12/26/1).
- 12.096 Reported By the Chair, that all the recommendations discussed and agreed by APC in March 2012 had now been completed. The update report included an additional set of recommendations for the Committee to consider to enhance and embed RPL across the University. In particular, the need to enhance our electronic support for RPL through e-Portfolio development, linkages to the HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Record) and GCU AcceleRATE programme. The ADLTQ (SHLS) advised

that the School was currently piloting *PebblePad* to support portfolio activity and to meet the wider professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements specifically for nursing and allied health professions programmes.

12.097 Resolved That the recommendations and further areas for development to enhance and embed the RPL process across the University be noted.

ANNUAL PROGRAMME MONITORING

12.098 Considered The outcomes and recommendations of a short life working group established to review the Annual Programme Monitoring process (Doc LTSC12/27/1).

12.099 Reported By the Chair, that at the request of the PVC Learning and Teaching a short life working group was established to review the annual programme monitoring process and make recommendations for a more streamlined process for implementation in the current academic year. The working group was chaired by the ADLTQ (SEBE) and included representation from across Schools and Policy and Planning. The report of the outcomes and recommendations of the review group were considered and accepted by APC on 5 December 2012. The following key points were noted:

- while not specifically flagged in the report, the new approach to the process would be undertaken as a pilot;
- GSBS/SEBE were using GCU Learn (as recommended) while SHLS were using the staff portal, GCYOU, to support their respective monitoring process;
- in future years data would be uploaded to the School's Annual Monitoring GCU Learn Community earlier in the process (October) to allow the process to be completed by the end of December.

12.100 Discussion The following points were raised by the Committee:

- the report outcomes and recommendations had somewhat deviated substantially from the clear remit of the group as understood by some members;
- it was understood that the revised process would provide for two monitoring outputs: one after the first diet which was to be added to after the second diet together with feedback from the external assessor(s);
- there was no great sense of major change to the process other than supported by GCU Learn;
- it was envisaged that there would be some changes to the APA pro-forma but this was not the case;
- the unconfirmed minute extract of the meeting of APC on 5 December 2012 noted that data would be pre-loaded onto the pro forma prior to Programme Leaders accessing it. It was understood that this had been completed by support staff within SEBE, however, this was not the case in SHLS as reported by the ADLTQ for the School as there would be implications on staff resourcing for this activity. It was noted that the pre-population of data had also not been completed for GSBS. It was suggested that this particular element be referred back to APC

for further discussion and decision of who should pre-load data;

- It was generally accepted that the process still remained reactive despite the brief to move towards a more proactive and less retrospective monitoring process and one where improvement and enhancement was closer to the point of next delivery to students.

- 12.101 Resolved
- i. That the recommendations from the working group be taken forward as a pilot for this year.
 - ii. That the review group be reconvened, to evaluate the pilot, consider the points raised by the Committee and clearly address the original brief.
(Action: Secretary)

EXTERNAL ASSESSORS SUB-COMMITTEE

- 12.102 Approved The recent update to the membership of the External Assessors Sub-Committee (EASC), operating as a sub-group of LTSC (Doc LTSC12/28/1).
- 12.103 Reported By the Assistant Head (QE&AG), that a PACE project had been scoped to review the University's arrangements for External Assessors.