

LEARNING AND TEACHING SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2013

- PRESENT:** Dr N Andrew, Dr B Beggs, Ms D Borrett, Prof L Creanor, Dr B Ellis, Mrs M Kelt, Ms C Mowat (vice Ms M Ward), Dr J Nally, Mrs E Smith, Ms E Todorova, Mr K Ward, Prof R Whittaker (Chair)
- APOLOGIES:** Mr N Dennis, Mr S Dobbie, Dr M Ferguson, Mrs M Henaghan, Mr M Jones, Ms J Main, Mrs R McDonald, Ms K Thomson, Ms M Ward, Mr U Saleem
- BY INVITATION:** Mr N Clark (VP Education Elect)
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr A MacKinlay (Secretary)

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed Ms Catriona Mowat (Positive Living and Disability Manager attending for Mrs Margaret Ward) and Neil Clark (VP Education Elect) attending alongside Danielle Borrett to the Committee.

MINUTES

- 12.104 Considered The unconfirmed draft minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee held on 23 January 2013 (Doc LTSC12/30/1).
- 12.105 Resolved That subject to a minor editorial amendment to the minutes at 12.096, *PeeblePad* to read *PebblePad*, the minutes be approved as a correct record.
(Action: Secretary)

MATTERS ARISING

Blended Learning Review (arising on 12.074 (i) and (ii))

- 12.106 Reported By the Chair that the report had been circulated to members for initial consideration and comment. The report would be formally considered later on the agenda at today's meeting.

ELISR: Law, Economics, Accountancy and Risk (arising on 12.091 (iii))

- 12.107 Reported By the Chair that the discussion points raised by the Committee in

relation to programme and subject (group) leads had yet to be fully considered. A similar point was raised for University consideration by the ELISR Panel at the recent subject review of the Department of Business Management. It would be appropriate for further discussion on the similar outcomes to be taken forward collectively with the relevant stakeholders, in particular, the Department of Human Resources given the nature of the point raised.

ELISR: School of Built and Natural Environment – Year on Progress Report (arising on 12.094)

12.108 Reported By the Chair that the points raised regarding the process had been flagged up to the working group to take forward in their review of the process.

Annual Programme Monitoring (arising on 12.101 (ii))

12.109 Reported By the Chair that the School level annual monitoring process for 2011/12 had recently concluded and an evaluation of the pilot would take place in due course, the output of which would feed into any reconvened working group to further review the process.

By the ADLTQ (SEBE) and chair of the working group, that she was somewhat surprised and confused at the comments raised by the Committee at its last meeting and wished the following to be noted in response:

- The remit and specification of the short life working group convened by the previous PVC Learning and Teaching had been fulfilled and approved by APC;
- It would be unreasonable to expect SEBE staff to perform clerical duties related to the APA process for the entire University. This was never part of the remit and specification of the working group and was not one of its nine recommendations;
- In relation to 12.101 (ii), since the short life working group no longer existed and the pilot was complete, no further meetings would take place.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE (APC)

12.110 Considered A report of items and matters arising from the meeting of APC held on 6 March 2013 (Doc LTSC12/31/1).

12.111 Reported **Taught Student Attendance Policy**

By Dr Ellis, that the report arising from APC consideration of the report from the Working Group on Assessment Regulations referred to guidance that would be circulated to Schools highlighting the proposed changes. This guidance had not yet been received by the Graduate School. In addition, the Graduate School had specific issues around full-time international Trimester B starts and was hoping for further clarity around this entry point going forward and impact as it related to the application of the assessment regulations.

(Action: Secretary)

Review and Rebranding of Consideration of Special factors (CSF)

By Dr Ellis, a request for an update with regards to the review following APC consideration of the report. The Secretary advised that Senate had now had the opportunity to consider and approve, in principle, the revised process subject to minor amendments. The CSF Working Group would be meeting shortly to consider the comments from Senate and proposed amendments and to update the policy for subsequent promulgation across the University.

CHAIR'S REPORT

12.112 Reported By the Chair, a brief update on the Strategy for Learning. Following an extensive consultation exercise with stakeholders across the University, the final strategy document would be presented to APC on the 22 May for approval and thereafter Senate on 14 June. To complement the strategy an operational plan would also be developed.

In relation to SFC Outcomes Agreement, the Chair advised the Committee that work to develop a 'College Connect' strategy would shortly commence. The outcomes of this work would subsume the current activities undertaken by the Greater Glasgow Articulation Partnership (GGAP) which had recently received a commitment of funding for the next two years.

FEEDBACK ENHANCEMENT GROUP

12.113 Considered A progress report on the activities of the Feedback Enhancement Group (Doc LTSC12/32/1).

12.114 Discussion In their consideration of the report the Committee had focussed discussions on the EvaSys module feedback survey pilot. The following key points were raised:

- There is currently no specific University policy for a system of module evaluation.
- The module evaluation process should be one of the key processes to gather feedback on the accessibility of learning and teaching. The module evaluation process should be one of the key processes to gather feedback on the accessibility of learning and teaching. This element was lacking in the pilot and should be included in any future evaluation especially to meet the University's statutory responsibilities and strategic commitments.
- In formulating policy and agreeing a system tool a number of key issues would require to be considered such as the human resources to manage and support the process, financial resource allocations, staff training needs, coverage, institutional reporting and benefits in terms of how we use the feedback from the evaluation and demonstrate to students that we are acting on it.
- To inform discussions external benchmarking with other institutions would also be helpful.
- The reasons as to why the University had previously moved away from a paper-based approach need to be re-considered in the development of any new policy and process.
- The questionnaire should allow for flexibility in structure to include module/programme specific questions and to capture feedback from students on all approved modes of study in particular online distance learning.

- The retention of a core set of questions would be important to draw general cross comparisons of learning and teaching.

12.115 Resolved That the progress report be noted for onward transmission to APC and that the points raised regarding the EvaSys module feedback survey pilot be forwarded to the Feedback Enhancement Group.
(Action: Secretary)

THEMATIC REVIEW OF BLENDED LEARNING

12.116 Considered The report of the thematic review of the infrastructure to support and enhance the staff and student experience of blended learning (Doc LTSC12/34/1).

12.117 Reported By Prof Creanor, that GCU LEAD were currently in the process of developing an operational plan to support the Strategy for Learning and the 2013/14 Blended Learning Roadmap; where relevant, the outcomes and key recommendations of the blended learning review would naturally feed into these parallel developments and future strategy.

12.118 Discussion The following points were raised by the Committee:

- In terms of the report findings, Ms Mowat highlighted the absence of any explicit consideration and statements around accessibility and in particular around learners supported by assistive technology. There had been no consultation with disability staff from Student Support Services, specifically, the specialist technologists who provide support to students in the use of assistive technology, which would have provided a useful and additional input to the review process and outcomes.
- In relation to the key recommendations around infrastructure, Mrs Kelt advised the Committee of the absence of any acknowledgement of the Library's own repository, *GCUStore*, to support learning and teaching which currently sits behind GCU Learn and specifically whether there was any plan to include wider consideration of this in the overall review and action planning process.

12.119 Resolved

- i. That the report and the key recommendations regarding blended learning infrastructure and areas for development be approved.
- ii. That it be noted that the responses to the recommendations will be developed into an action plan for consideration at a future meeting of the committee following consultation with all relevant stakeholders.
(Action: Prof L Creanor)
- iii. That Mrs Kelt provides the Secretary with relevant commentary as it relates to *GCUStore* for inclusion in the review of blended learning and where appropriate the Strategy for Learning.
(Action: M Kelt)

[Secretary's note: the following commentary was provided by Mrs Kelt after the meeting:

GCUStore (formerly Spoken Word Project) is the Library's dedicated multimedia repository enabling the storage, secure delivery and retrieval

of multimedia content (such as recorded lectures, podcasts and masterclasses) via GCULearn. The system is maintained by the Digital Development and Information Literacy (DDIL) team in the Library. GCUStore is based on an unsustainable legacy system with no external support which represents a high level of risk for business continuity. Work is underway to identify a suitable replacement which will meet the needs of the Blended Learning Strategy and Strategy for Learning over the coming years.]

REVIEW OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE OF THE GCU DISTANCE LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE

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| 12.120 | Considered | An executive summary report and action plan from the short term working group established to review the student experience of the GCU distance learning infrastructure (Doc LTSC12/35/1). |
| 12.121 | Reported | <p>By the Secretary, the context around the review process and objectives of the working group as outlined in the executive summary report, in particular, the approach undertaken by the working group and its sharp focus over a short timeframe to identify issues for improvement and solutions. The immediate next stage of activity would be to undertake a desk-based review of all the programme material of current distance learning provision received from programme leaders at the request of the working group. A target date of end May had been set to complete the desk-based review work.</p> <p>By Mrs Kelt, that the Library's distance learning webpages had recently been reviewed and were now live. In relation to the action plan and specifically the provision of SPSS by alternative and electronic means, Mrs Kelt confirmed that this could now be provided online.</p> |
| 12.122 | Resolved | <p>That in parallel to the consideration of the summary report and action plan, the positive support for the review by members be noted. A further update on progress would be reported at the June meeting.</p> <p>(Action: Secretary)</p> |

ACCESSIBILITY OF WEB AND MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

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| 12.123 | Considered | A paper from the Library and the Disability Team proposing the establishment of a working party to discuss GCU wide issues around accessibility of web and multimedia resources, and the development of supporting policy and guidance (Doc LTSC12/36/1). |
| 12.124 | Reported | By Mrs Kelt, that the proposal to establish a working party was much needed not only in response to the forthcoming publication of new guidelines around the accessibility of web resources and compliance but also to link with the operational plan for the new Strategy for Learning (SfL). Ms Mowat also reminded the Committee of one of the Equality Outcomes to ensure the accessibility and inclusiveness of learning and teaching through curriculum design and that this was a core element of the SfL. |
| 12.125 | Discussion | The Committee welcomed the proposal and the prospect of further guidance and good practice guidelines to support curriculum design. In terms of focus it was proposed that the remit of the working party be widened out to include learning and teaching and beyond simply the accessibility of web and multimedia resources. The composition of the |

working party should be extended and the paper re-developed to fully address the proposed revised remit.

- 12.126 Resolved That the proposal to establish a working party to discuss GCU wide issues around accessibility be supported and that consideration now be given to extending the remit of the group to include wider learning and teaching in support of the new Strategy for Learning and operational plan.
(Action: C Mowat/M Kelt)

LIBRARY GUIDANCE ON OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

- 12.127 Considered A paper from the Library setting out its position and guidance on the use and publication of Open Educational Resources (OER) (Doc LTSC12/37/1).

- 12.128 Reported By Mrs Kelt, the current position as outlined in the guidance document. A point of clarification was required around the existence of specific University policy in relation to Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). It was suggested that this be checked with the Department of Research Innovation and Enterprise (RIE).

By Dr Beggs, that while accepting the position and guidance we should also maintain a careful balance so as not to diminish the overall ethos around the use and publication of OER. Further consideration should be given to the provision of some variance in terms of IPR policy in respect to financial and commercial gain versus learning and teaching.

Prof Creanor welcomed the guidance which would also complement the guidelines for the use of social media in learning and teaching approved by LTSC at a previous meeting. Prof Creanor also highlighted that the University did not have a particularly effective culture for sharing learning and teaching resources at the moment and that the guidance would be a positive step forward to spur a culture variance.

OUTCOME OF JOINT PROGRAMME RE-APPROVAL EVENT

PgD Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (School of Health and Life Sciences)

- 12.129 Approved The report of the outcomes of the Joint Programme Re-approval Event (with the Nursing and Midwifery Council) for the PgD Specialist Community Public Health Nursing programme held on 6 March 2013 and the Programme Team's response to the conclusions, requirements and recommendations of the Programme Re-approval Panel (Doc LTSC12/33/1).

MSC RESEARCH METHODS (HISTORY) (Graduate School)

- 12.130 Approved The proposal from the Graduate School for the introduction of a new History pathway to the current MSc Research Methods programme framework (Doc LTSC12/38/1).

EXTENSION TO PERIOD OF APPROVAL (SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT)

- 12.131 Approved The extension to the period of approval, to September 2014, of the following programme from the School of Engineering and Built Environment (Doc LTSC12/39/1):

- MA Design Practice and Management

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12.132 Reported

That the next meeting of the Committee on 12 June 2013 would require to be rescheduled due to member attendance at the forthcoming QAA Scotland International Conference – Enhancement and Innovation in Higher Education conference taking place 11-13 June 2013 in Glasgow.
(Action: Secretary)