

LEARNING AND TEACHING SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2012

- PRESENT:** Ms D Borrett (VP Education-elect), Prof L Creanor, Mr N Dennis, Mr M Jones, Mrs M Kelt, Ms J Main, Ms C Mowat (vice Mrs M Ward), Dr J Nally, Ms K Thomson, Ms E Todorova, Ms M Turnbull, Mr K Ward, Prof R Whittaker (Chair)
- APOLOGIES:** Dr N Andrew, Dr B Beggs, Ms K Dalgarno, Mrs E Smith, Mrs M Ward, Mr S Ward,
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs M Henaghan, Mr A MacKinlay (Secretary), Mrs B McMahon

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

Prof Ruth Whittaker introduced her new role as Chair to members of the Committee.

The Chair welcomed Ms Jackie Main, Director of Student Experience, to her first meeting of the Committee and Ms Danielle Borrett, Vice-President Education-elect (GCUSA) attending on behalf of Mr Simon Ward and Ms Catriona Mowat, Positive Living and Disability Manager for Mrs Margaret Ward.

MINUTES

- 11.149 Considered The unconfirmed draft minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee held on 25 January 2012 (Doc LTSC11/44/1).
- 11.150 Resolved That the minutes be approved as a correct record.
(Action: AMK)

MATTERS ARISING

Graduate Attributes (arising on 11.118)

- 11.151 Reported By Ms Thomson, that work to promote and embed Graduate Attributes was progressing and that a communication strategy would be developed to increase awareness and promote activity across the University.

Development of Policy to Secure Integrity of On-line Assessment Off Campus (arising on 11.120)

- 11.152 Reported By Prof Creanor, that there had not yet been an opportunity for further discussions on the off campus assessment issues with Dr Eadie prior to his departure and to identify the origin of the issues raised. For GCU LEAD,

the focus had been on getting the module evaluation questionnaires up and running on GCU Learn over the last few weeks. Ms Thomson reported that an issue around online submission had been raised by the Learning Technologists within SHLS. It was agreed that Prof Creanor and Ms Thomson would explore this further.

(Action: LC/KT)

Annual Programme Monitoring Process: IT Issues (arising on 11.122)

11.153 Reported By the Secretary, that still no response had yet been received.

Managing Student Placements (arising on 11.135)

11.154 Reported By the Chair, that APC had considered the paper from Ms S McKinnon at its meeting on 7 March 2012 and resolved that it be approved and progressed to Senate for further debate and final approval. Once approved by Senate, a communication strategy would be developed to ensure that all staff are aware of the need to refer to the Risk Assessment Guide when identifying and approving credit bearing placements. It would also be proposed that the management of student placements be included in the rolling programme of thematic audit to be re-instated.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE (APC)

11.155 Reported By the Chair, the following items from the last meeting of the Academic Policy Committee held on 7 March 2012 for the attention of LTSC:

Feedback Enhancement Implementation Group (arising APC 11.156)

11.156 Reported The work of the Group was ongoing and a report on progress would be provided at the next meeting of APC in May.

Foreign Language Provision (arising APC 11.157)

11.157 Reported At the last meeting of LTSC the Chair reported the recommendations from the review of foreign language provision reported to APC. With regards to the recommendation that language provision should also be extended to PGT and PGR students, the Executive Board had recently agreed a proposal to work in partnership with the Open University to provide modern foreign language teaching available to all our PGT and PGR students from this coming academic year. Development work to progress the partnership had now commenced.

Student International Mobility Sub-Committee (arising APC 11.158)

11.158 Reported A Strategy for International Mobility would be considered at the next meeting of APC in May.

Learning Development Centres (arising APC 11.159)

11.159 Reported At the last meeting of LTSC, the Chair reported that a paper on progress made in establishing the School LDCs had been submitted to APC. A further detailed report on developments would be considered at the next meeting of APC in May.

Module Feedback (arising APC 11.160)

11.160 Reported Since the March meeting of APC work had been undertaken to get module evaluation questionnaires up and running in GCU Learn over the last few weeks. Prof Creanor also reported that Module Leaders were extremely pleased that the online questionnaire was accessible via GCU Learn and that there was the opportunity for additional questions to be added to the approved list.

National Student Survey (arising APC 11.163)

11.161 Reported The final response rate would be provided to members at the May meeting of APC. At early March the response rate had reached and exceeded its initial target of 50% with a rate of 55% and to date 19 subject areas were publishable.

Key Information Sets (KIS) (arising APC 11.165-11.168)

11.162 Reported APC received a paper from the Director of Policy and Planning on Key Information Sets. To ensure relevant staff across the University are fully aware of the purpose and implications of KIS a briefing paper of KIS for wider GCU circulation would be prepared.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook (arising APC 11.177-11.180)

11.163 Reported APC had considered and approved the main amendments to Version 4 of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook for implementation in 2012/13. The handbook would be published and circulated GCU wide in the run up to the next academic session.

HEAR Implementation (arising APC 11.184-11.187)

11.164 Reported APC considered an update on HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Report) implementation and a detailed action plan to pilot HEAR for selected programmes this forthcoming AS 2012/13. The scheme will be piloted within SHLS and outcomes reported to APC for implementation across the entire student population.

Assessment Regulations (arising APC 11.188-11.191)

11.165 Reported APC considered a paper and recommendations from the short life working group tasked with reviewing the University Assessment Regulations. The working group would continue to meet to address the recommendations towards implementation in 2013/14. The membership of the group would be extended as appropriate to ensure the relevant stakeholder input to the proposed recommendations.

Recognition of Prior Learning (arising APC 11.192-11.195)

11.166 Reported APC considered an RPL update report from the Head of GCU LEAD following approval of the revised policy by APC in May 2011 and had approved the recommendations within the report.

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (arising APC 11.203)

11.167 Reported APC approved the institutional response to the 2011 Enhancement-led Institutional Review report.

Secretary's note: it is proposed that for future meetings a key highlights paper of APC items would be provided to the Committee in place of the current oral report provided by the Chair.

(Action: AMK)

CALEDONIAN CONFERENCE 2012

- 11.168 Considered A summary report from the Students' Association of the discussions by class representatives at the Caledonian Conference 2012 (Doc LTSC11/46/1).
- 11.169 Reported By Mr K Ward:
- that five themes had been specifically highlighted for discussion at the 2011/12 conference;
 - the format of the conference had also changed slightly for this academic session with a separate day assigned to each School for discussions;
 - it would be proposed that for the next and future cycle of conferences, the event would revert back to its original format to provide cross-School discussion of issues;
 - one of the more contentious themes discussed was the proposal to charge module resit fees. Following the conference, a decision had been taken by the University (Executive Board) that no change to the current arrangements should be introduced and that the schedule of fees would remain unchanged for retaken modules.
- 11.170 Resolved
- i. That the updated decision by the University (Executive Board) in relation to module resit fees be noted;
 - ii. That the feedback from the student mobility session be forwarded to the Staff Student International Mobility Sub-Committee;
(Action: KW)
 - iii. That there being no specific action required in relation to the points raised during the discussions, including any recommendation to APC, the summary report be noted.

STUDENT SUMMIT 2012

- 11.171 Considered A summary report from the Students' Association of the discussions by class representatives at the Student Summit 2011 (Doc LTSC11/47/1).
- 11.172 Reported By Mr K Ward:
- that the Student Summit is an annual Trimester A event designed to gather feedback from class representatives early in the academic session;
 - similar to the Caledonian Conference, five themes had been specifically highlighted for discussion at the Summit;
 - of specific note were the outcomes of discussions around student feedback and the library opening hours;
 - in relation to student feedback, students had welcomed the proposed new mechanisms for module feedback through GCU Learn to be implemented in 2011/12 but would have preferred for the previous system of module feedback through Questback

to have been retained in place of the class representative approach;

- the impact of the proposed reduction to the library opening hours over the summer and forthcoming academic session be noted.

11.173 Reported By Mrs M Kelt, Senior Librarian, that the views of the students are noted. Maintaining the current level of support within the library would be subject to further discussion and decision in respect to the wider funding available for library services at the University in the short to longer term.

11.174 Resolved That there being no specific action required in relation to the points raised during the discussions, including any recommendation to APC, the summary report be noted.

STUDENT REPRESENTATION ON ACADEMIC COMMITTEES

11.175 Considered A paper from the Students' Association on proposed changes to student representation on academic committees (Doc LTSC11/48/1).

11.176 Reported By Mr K Ward:

- that the paper outlined proposals to make some adjustments to student representation and to reinforce existing arrangements within the University's framework of academic governance and quality assurance;
- the election of class representatives should be completed as early as possible at the start of the academic session and notified to the Students' Association immediately thereafter. The process for the election of class representatives at the end of the preceding academic session is proposed to Schools;
- that some Programme Boards were appointing separate representatives not from the existing pool of class representatives already nominated from the programme. This practice should be discouraged;
- the most significant changes proposed are the arrangements for the role of School Officer. This role has been operating for the last three academic sessions and changes are proposed in the wake of the University restructuring and an evaluation of the level of responsibility required for the role. The position of School Officer is remunerated with a payment of £150 at the end of Trimester A and Trimester B. More recently the source of these payments has been from the general budget of the Students' Association however this is deemed to be no longer sustainable and a proposal for Schools to take on the costs of funding their three School Officer positions is now presented;
- for LTSC it is proposed that the Student Voice Taught Postgraduate Students' Convenor automatically assumes the role of the taught postgraduate student representative on the Committee. No change to undergraduate representation is proposed;
- In relation to the Senate Disciplinary Committee, the Students' Association is seeking to propose an amendment to the current composition as it relates to their student representation. In addition to the Student President, the GCUSA believes this role should only be filled by the sabbatical officers and if none were available, this representation should be extended to members of

Student Voice, nominated by the Student President.

- 11.177 Discussed The following points arose from the Committee's discussion of the proposed changes:
- the proposed change to the taught postgraduate student representative on LTSC was not a significant one and would only require a minor update to the current composition detail for this member;
 - the specific points and recommendations around the system of class and Programme Board representatives should be disseminated to Schools;
 - the proposed changes to the role of School Officer were noted;
 - in relation to the selection process for School Officers, it was suggested that the Associate Dean of Learning, Teaching and Quality could act as the School representative on the selection panel;
 - the proposal for Schools to take on the costs of funding their three School Officer positions would be subject to further discussion and final decision. In the first instance the proposal should be forwarded to the PVC Learning and Teaching for initial comment and way forward;
 - Mrs Henaghan advised members that the Code of Student Discipline was currently under revision. The proposed changes to the composition would be considered as part of the review process. The revised code and changes to composition would require to be approved by Senate.
- 11.178 Resolved
- i. That the proposed change to the LTSC composition be drafted for approval and implementation in 2012/13;
(Action: AMK)
 - ii. The specific points raised around the system of class and Programme Board representatives should be disseminated to Schools;
(Action: KW)
 - iii. That further work is undertaken to finalise the proposed changes to the School Officer role, including confirmation of funding for the positions, School input to the selection process, and definition of responsibilities to ensure consistency of approach.
(Action: KW)

ACADEMIC APPEALS OVERVIEW REPORT: 2009/10 AND 2010/11

- 11.179 Considered The overview reports on academic appeals for session 2009/10 and session 2010/11 (Doc LTSC11/49/1).
- 11.180 Reported By Mrs Henaghan:
- that the number of academic appeals received and considered through the appeals process continued to be high as evidenced in the statistics provided in the overview reports;
 - from an analysis of appeals received, the vast majority were based on late special factors and resulting in decisions being made retrospectively against confirmed Assessment Board recommendations. Ms Thomson reported that the School of Health and Life Sciences had seen at least a fourfold increase CSFF

submissions;

- the short life working group tasked with reviewing the University Assessment Regulations had also noted in their initial findings that the procedures required to be tightened;
- it was apparent that appeals were being made on a routine basis rather than the exception, and the specific ground for appealing perhaps not clearly understood by students;
- a formal review of the process would form part of the wider review of the Assessment Regulations.

11.181 Discussed In relation to the scope of stakeholder representation on the Assessment Regulations Working Group it was queried whether this would be extended to include student representation.

Mrs Henaghan advised the Committee that once the implications of the recommendations for change had been discussed further, all relevant stakeholders would be identified at that point and would contribute to the further development of the proposed changes.

At this stage of the process, the appropriate student input to the review would be captured. In addition to a point raised by Ms Mowat, as it related to the impact of changes on disabled students, discussion around the lawful requirements and legal obligations of the University to disabled students would include consultation and input from Student Support Services.

It was suggested that a benchmark of what would be an appropriate number of appeals based on student population at the University could be explored.

11.182 Resolved

- i. That the overview reports be noted;
- ii. That the proposed review of the academic appeals process to form part of the wider review of the Assessment Regulations be noted.

PLAGIARISM OVERVIEW REPORT: 2009/10 AND 2010/11

11.183 Considered The overview reports on plagiarism offences for session 2009/10 and session 2010/11 (Doc LTSC11/50/1).

11.184 Discussed The following points were noted from discussions:

- a member advised that they had reviewed work with serious examples of plagiarism and more worryingly just weeks after issuing students with guidance on plagiarism;
- more recently a case of ghostwriting/commissioned work had come to light as part of a Senate Disciplinary case;
- the extent to which proofreading was bordering on plagiarism would benefit from further discussion;
- a review of School wide practices and approaches to prevention and awareness would be useful;
- further consideration should be given at an early stage of the module development and assessment design process to minimise opportunities to plagiarise;
- it was noted that academic staff were generally being more vigilant to case of plagiarism;

Mrs Kelt reminded the Committee of the link to the plagiarism section of the Library's online information literacy and employability skills package SMILE which could be linked into modules on GCU Learn. It was also noted that PLATO may still be available. Mrs Kelt agreed to circulate the link to members.

Similar to the academic appeals process, Mrs Henaghan advised that the plagiarism regulations would form part of the wider review of the Assessment Regulations.

- 11.185 Resolved
- i. That the overview reports be noted;
 - ii. That the proposed review of the plagiarism regulation would form part of the wider review of the Assessment Regulations be noted.

STUDENT COMPLAINT MEDIATION AND RESOLUTION PROCEDURE OVERVIEW REPORT: 2010/11

11.186 Considered The overview report on the Student Complaint Mediation and Resolution Procedure for Session 2010/11 (Doc LTSC11/51/1).

11.187 Reported By Mrs Henaghan that one complaint for the 2010/11 reporting period had been taken to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman for independent review. The complaint had not been upheld.

In terms of future work the following key points are noted:

- the development of a mediation approach to the early resolution of potential complaints will be considered;
- issues of channelling, e.g. re-enforcing where complaints should be submitted within the University, will be progressed and agreed;
- an audit of the outcomes of complaints upheld will be undertaken to identify continuous improvement and contribution to enhancement.

- 11.188 Resolved
- i. That the overview report be noted and future developments supported;
 - ii. That the one entry on the statistical analysis recording both a home and international entry be checked.
(Action: JM)

THEMATIC AUDIT

11.189 Considered A discussion paper to re-establish the forward programme of thematic audit (Doc LTSC11/52/1).

11.190 Reported By Mrs Henaghan, that the paper had been drafted at the request of the PVC Learning and Teaching and outlines the proposal to re-establish a forward programme of thematic audit. The next step of the process would be to give consideration to the initial themes identified for review over the short-to-medium term listed in the paper with a view to finalising a draft programme of audit activity for 2012/13.

11.191 Discussed It was proposed that two audits could be completed each academic session, a procedural audit and a learning and teaching related audit with space for an ad hoc audit to address a theme arising organically. It was

agreed that members would provide the Secretary with comments and a note of any other themes that could be included in the forward programme.

- 11.192 Resolved
- i. That the paper be noted;
 - ii. That members provide the Secretary with comments and a note of any other themes that could be included in the forward programme of thematic audit activity.
(Action: AMK)

OUTCOME OF PROGRAMME APPROVAL EVENT:

MSc International Development (Glasgow School for Business and Society)

- 11.193 Approved The report of the outcomes of the Programme Approval Event for the MSc International Development programme held on 25 November 2011 and Programme Development Board's response to the conclusions, requirements and recommendations of the Programme Approval Panel. (Doc LTSC11/53/1)
- 11.194 Noted It was noted that the report had been approved by the Panel and the Programme Development Board's response to the requirements and recommendations had been signed off by the Chair proposing the recommendation for approval to LTSC. Despite this, some elements of the report and response were queried in terms of their accuracy and currency. It was agreed that the programme could be approved at the meeting today on the basis of Panel/Chair recommendation for approval and that the points were not of a substantive material nature to prevent approval but that they be followed up as part of post-approval activity for the programme.
(Action: AMK)

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

- 11.195 Approved The extension to the period of approval, to September 2013, of the following programmes from the School of Engineering and Built Environment (Doc LTSC11/54/1):
- BEng (Hons) Building Services Engineering
 - MSc Real Estate Management

EXTENSION TO PERIOD OF APPROVAL (SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND LIFE SCIENCES)

- 11.196 Approved The extension to the period of approval, to September 2013, of the following programmes from the School of Health and Life Sciences (Doc LTSC11/55/1):
- Doctorate in Counselling Psychology (joint award with the University of Strathclyde)
 - PgD Psychodynamic Counselling and Therapeutic Practice (accreditation of the Scottish Institute of Human Relations)
 - Pre-Registration Midwifery (Dip HE/BM)

- 11.197 Noted The last intake to the Pre-Registration Midwifery programme was September 2011. The extension to period of approval has been granted indefinitely until the programme phases out. The programme will not be required to go forward for programme re-approval in the future but

would continue to be subject to the University's normal processes for annual monitoring and the appropriate NMC requirements for the monitoring of pre-registration midwifery provision.

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

11.198 Received The confirmed minutes of the meeting of the Academic Policy Committee held on 7 December 2011 (Doc APC11/38/1).

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

EXTERNAL ASSESSORS SUB-COMMITTEE

11.199 Reported By Mrs Henaghan, that following the departure of Dr Eadie, the Chair of the External Assessors Sub-Committee was now vacant and required to be filled as a matter of urgency. It had been beneficial that the chair role had been assumed by i) an academic staff member; and ii) within a central support department to provide the independent oversight that the process required, all other members being from the Schools. The process to identify an appropriate Chair would now be progressed.
(Action: DGAQ)