

LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2009

Present: Mr I Farr (Chair), Mr N Church, Dr J Goodenough,
Professor B Goodwin, Dr J Impett, Dr C Matthews, Dr C Riggs,
Mr T Sutton, Professor Y Tasker, Dr R Tillett, Dr M Woodcock

With: Mr J Tully, Ms M Pavey

In attendance: Dr K Campbell

Apologies: Miss H Fisher, Mr J Mitchell, Mr D Sheppard

1. MINUTES

Confirmed

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2009.

2. STATEMENTS

(1) *Membership*

Mr Farr welcomed new members to their first meeting of the Committee.

(2) *Consultation on Learning and Teaching policymaking*

Mr Farr advised the Committee that he had met with all Associate Deans with responsibility for Learning and Teaching (L&T), the PVC (Academic) and colleagues from the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office (LTQO) to discuss ways of prioritising the University's L&T agenda and ensuring appropriate consultation mechanisms on proposed policies. This was ongoing.

(3) *Timetabling and Slotting*

Mr Farr reported that amendments were being made to the current slotting system in an attempt to make better use of whole of the working week. The new system would be implemented as part of 2010/11 module update and a guidance note on implementation would be circulated shortly.

3. REPORT ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUPPORTING QUALITY ASSURANCE AND FLTQC IN 2009/10

Reported

(1) Following a review of support for Quality Assurance in HUM with the Dean, Director of Faculty Administration and Associate Dean (L&T), Mr Tully was to take responsibility for the handling of course approvals and closures and responses to External Examiner reports. Ms Pavey would now be acting as Minute Secretary to the FLTQC.

(2) A Blackboard site had been set up in the Academic Tab on the portal to host documents and information relating to the FLTQC.

- (3) Minutes from the FLTQC were now a standing item on the University's Learning and Teaching Committee.

Resolved

Student and Student Union representatives will be given access to the FLTQC Blackboard site.

4. REPORT ON THE SEPTEMBER 2009 LTC BULLETIN

Reported

- (1) *UEA London*
The Faculty's MA Creative Entrepreneurship would be re-launched and run from UEA London from September 2010.
- (2) *Guidelines on samples to be sent to External Examiners*
These had been slightly amended to ensure minimum sample sizes across the range of marks.
- (3) *New External Examiner Report Proforma*
This had been introduced in 2008/9 to encourage more qualitative comments. Its effectiveness would be reviewed as the reports were considered by Schools.

Resolved

Good Cause for Absence from Course Tests

Mr Farr agreed to seek clarification from the Director of Taught Programmes on when students would be expected to retake course tests for which a good cause ruling had been approved. It was unclear whether such tests would be retaken at the end of the semester or the end of the academic year. Members were concerned that due regard should be taken of the pedagogical reason for course tests which might require flexibility in when they were retaken.

5. COURSE REVIEW

Received

A schedule of course reviews in HUM for 2009/10

Resolved

Given that the School had made major amendments to its postgraduate taught programmes for 2009/10 Mr Tully will seek a concession to defer the review of postgraduate programmes in History until 2010/11.

6. COURSE CLOSURES

Received

A report on courses in the Faculty that were to be closed.

Noted

- (1) VT39 History of Art and Literature with a Foreign Language should be added to the list
- (2) Course closures would be a standing item on FLTQC's agenda.

7. MODULE MONITORING AND COURSE UPDATE FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES 2009/10

Received

A report on the Faculty's arrangements for module monitoring and course update.

Noted

- (1) Further consideration would be given to the cycle of module monitoring and update later in the academic year in order to look at the most useful way for Schools to reflect on their course provision. The CU1 process was not deemed by some Schools to be the most productive way of doing this.
- (2) Members agreed that it would assist Teaching Directors in the process of module update if they had information on new modules or modules no longer running in other Schools. Consideration could be given to using the FLTQ Blackboard site as a forum to exchange information on Schools' module offerings.

Resolved

TPO will send an email to Teaching Directors once all Schools had completed module update.

8. ARRANGEMENTS FOR MODULE EVALUATION IN 2009/10

Considered

An oral report from Mr Tully

Noted

- (1) The online system allowed 40 questions of a quantitative nature and 5 of a qualitative one about the module and 8 qualitative and 2 quantitative about the tutor.
- (2) There could be problems for Schools which had modules with a large number of seminar groups since the system could only accommodate comments on up to 10 tutors.
- (3) Since the online module evaluation pilot last academic year there had been no additional enhancements to the system.

Resolved

- (1) Teaching Directors will consult with colleagues in their Schools and advise Mr Tully by 30 October 2009 on whether their School will evaluate modules online or by paper, with the proviso that whichever system was chosen would apply to all modules at that level.
- (2) Mr Tully will investigate how issues with modules with more than 10 tutors can be accommodated in online evaluation.

9. COURSE APPROVALS

Resolved

To approve the proposal for a BA in French or Spanish Honours and Film and Television subject to further consideration being given by the Course

team designate to the possible introduction of 20 credits of free choice in Year 2.

10. CONCESSIONS

Received

A document outlining delegated powers to approve concessions against the regulations and appoint Boards of Examiners.

Resolved

Proposals for how delegated powers to approve concessions will be considered in the Faculty will be drafted by Mr Farr, Mr Tully and the Senior Administrators in TPO and circulated to FLTQ members for approval. The principle of subsidiarity would guide the process as far as possible.

11. PLAGIARISM

Reported

- (1) Mr Farr reported that a revised policy on plagiarism had been implemented for 2009/10. Three levels of offence had been introduced linked to the experience of the student and the nature of plagiarism. A training session for HUM Plagiarism Officers had been scheduled for later in the semester.
- (2) Some members of the Committee expressed concern about aspects of the operation of the policy and the application of penalties.

Resolved

Mr Farr to discuss their concerns with Drs Tillett and Matthews. These could be aired with the Director of Taught Programmes at the training session.

12. SEMESTER DATES

Reported

Mr Farr reported that, as part of the review of CCS, the structure of the Academic Year was also being considered. Pending decisions over the longer term, proposals had been circulated about semester dates in 2011/12 and 2012/13; these would be confirmed by the University's Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) on October 28th. One possibility under active consideration was that, to ensure a 12/12/6 academic year, the Spring Semester in those years would have to start in the first week in January.

Resolved

HUM FLTQC would not support proposals for a 12/12/6 structure which it believed would put unacceptable pressure on staff.

13. DURATION OF EXAMINATIONS

Reported

Mr Farr reported that LTQO had undertaken a review of the duration of examinations across the University. He outlined why he thought the issues raised in the LTQO questionnaire would have been better referred first to FLTQC's rather than to individual Schools.

Noted

Members emphasised the value of three hour examinations as an effective means of assessing learning outcomes where Module Organisers deemed this to be appropriate, especially in Level 3 modules.

Resolved

Mr Tully will produce a spreadsheet on examination durations across HUM as part of the Faculty's response to the review.

14. NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS)

Considered

An interim report produced by Mr Farr on behalf of FLTQC for the Faculty Executive Committee

Resolved

To approve the report.

15. HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH AND INNOVATION GROUP (HERIG) REPORT

Received

An oral report from Mr Farr on the HERIG Report.

Noted

- (1) The tenor of the HERIG report was the invitation to consider student engagement in the widest sense and collective thinking across the Faculty would be required to address this.
- (2) HIS had asked new undergraduate students to undertake a 750 word assignment prior to arriving at UEA and 83% of students had produced that work by Week 1. It was hoped that being clear about what was expected of students from the very beginning of their studies would have a positive impact on student engagement.