

LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2009

Present: Mr I Farr (Chair), Mr N Church, Dr J Goodenough, Mr W Goode,  
Professor B Goodwin, Dr C Matthews, Mr J Mitchell, Mr T Sutton,  
Professor Y Tasker, Dr M Woodcock

With: Ms M Pavey

In attendance: Dr K Campbell, Ms H Fisher

Apologies: Dr J Impett, Mr D Sheppard, Dr R Tillett and Mr J Tully

**16. MINUTES**

Confirmed

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2009.

**17. STATEMENTS**

(1) *Semester dates for 2011/12 and 2012/13*

The Committee noted these dates. Mr Farr reported that one of the considerations taken into account in determining the semester dates for 2012/13 was the need to extend the examination and assessment period. The Examinations Office is currently investigating ways in which the examination timetable might be condensed into fewer days. In the meantime Mr Farr expressed concern about the pressures on academic and administrative staff of a three week Christmas vacation in 2012-2013. He reported that there were ongoing discussions at university level about how to cope with the pressure on administrative staff by the assessment and examination period as part of the review of semester dates from 2013-2014 onwards.

Resolved

That members should contact Mr Farr with any views on the structure of the academic year.

(2) *MA in Creative Entrepreneurship (MACE)*

Mr Farr advised members that this Humanities based degree would be based in London from September 2010. A business case for MACE London was being considered by the HUM Executive on 14 December 2009. This was required to satisfy the University's Learning and Teaching Committee that the Faculty had given proper consideration to all issues arising from running the course in London. Mr Farr had held lengthy discussions with the MACE course director and was confident that the course could run successfully in London.

Resolved

(1) LTQC mandated Mr Farr to take Chair's action to give academic approval to MACE London once the business case had been considered by the HUM Executive. He would write a covering memorandum addressing key quality assurance questions relating to running the course in London.

(2) The revised memorandum on Programme Specification and quality assurance related would be considered at a future LTQC meeting.

## **18. COURSE APPROVALS PROCEDURE**

Reported

Mr Farr advised members that, when new course proposals were brought to the Committee for consideration, they must be accompanied by a short statement that could be used by the Admissions Office for publicising course details to applicants.

## **19. COURSE APPROVALS**

*BA Philosophy and History*

Considered

A proposal to introduce a joint Philosophy and History degree.

Resolved

Subject to course profile element of the programme being amended to ensure that students could only take a Dissertation in one or other discipline and not both, this was approved.

## **20. COURSE TITLE CHANGES/COURSE CLOSURE**

Received

A report on courses in the Faculty that were to change their title and a report on those courses which were to be closed.

## **21. LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY OFFICE**

Noted

(1) A paper on the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) priorities for 2009/10.

(2) The creation of a UEA Central Student Handbook available to students and staff on Blackboard. Mr Farr reported that this was in part a response to the student submission for the recent QAA Audit which had highlighted the need for coherent provision of easily accessible information. Members were requested to bring the Handbook to the attention of students.

(3) The UEA Handbook on Learning, Teaching Quality Assurance and Enhancement. It was noted that this would be particularly useful to new academic staff since it provided useful information on how the University addresses issues related to quality assurance and enhancement.

## **22. CONTACT HOURS AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

Considered

A paper from Mr Farr to Heads of Schools on contact hours and student engagement.

Noted

(1) Schools were actively considering contact hours and a number of approaches were being considered or adopted. LIT was increasing seminar contact time for first year modules and FTV was also considering this. PSI was considering the introduction of 90 minute seminars for key level one modules. ART was looking into the possibility of increasing final year contact hours. Helping students to identify what they should be focussing on in their private study time was highlighted as an issue across a number of Schools.

(2) The student representatives present stressed that increasing contact hours was not necessarily as important as ensuring that the quality of what was covered in classes was of a high standard. They noted that there were other ways of adding value to the student experience such as improving feedback on work.

### **23. NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY (NSS), POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT EXPERIENCE SURVEY (PTES) AND POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE SURVEY (PRES)**

Considered

(1) A summary document from Mr Farr giving a Faculty overview of the NSS, PTES and PRES.

(2) School responses to issues raised through the NSS 2009.

Noted

(1) Across the Faculty there were only 25 student comments relating to class contact hours whereas in HIS alone there had been over 40 student comments expressing concern about library resources.

(2) PTES and PRES data was not deemed to be as robust as that arising from the NSS. Members agreed that School Staff Student Liaison Committees (SSLC) were not necessarily the most suitable forum for discussion of the findings from the data, especially as the format in which the data was currently provided did not lend itself to meaningful discussion at School level.

### **24. PGT DIRECTORS**

Received

A report of the PGT Directors' meeting held on 28 October 2009.

Reported

(1) Mr Farr advised the Committee that the HUM Faculty Executive would shortly be considering a paper which could formalise the creation of a HUM Graduate School. PGT Directors had expressed a wish for taught Masters students to be members of the Graduate School from its inception.

(2) The Committee discussed the case for the non-anonymisation of Masters students' work. The representative from the Union of UEA Students (SU) reiterated the SU's stance which was that work should be anonymous even at the point of second marking. He felt that the views of postgraduate students should be elicited on this issue.

### **25. TAUGHT PROGRAMMES POLICY GROUP (TPPG)**

Reported

Mr Farr reported that, although TPPG had resolved last academic year not to introduce the use of stickers on coursework for students with learning difficulties, this year there had been a few cases where students with learning difficulties had been upset at unconstructive feedback on their work that related to poor spelling and grammar. Discussions on allowing students to highlight their learning difficulties on their coursework were ongoing and staff would be issued with guidance notes from the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office on the matter in the near future.

## **26. HUM LTQC BLACKBOARD SITE**

Noted

The Committee's Blackboard site now hosted a range of documents, including committee papers, minutes, action plans, Learning Enhancement Team reports, School Employability reports and the new policy outlining the delegated powers to approve concessions.

## **27. ANONYMISATION OF COURSEWORK**

Noted

(1) Discussion of this item had taken place as outlined in Minutes 24 and 25 above.

(2) The University's policy on marks by registration number was being reviewed at the end of the 2009/10 academic year.

## **28. REVERSE REGISTRATION PILOT**

Reported

A pilot was being run for all new students joining UEA from January 2010. As part of the pilot students would be required to complete online registration prior to arriving at the University rather than after they had attended a formal registration event as has been the case hitherto. HUM were co-ordinating a University wide event for the registration of incoming Visiting and Exchange students.

## **29. EMPLOYABILITY**

Considered

A Faculty response to the HUM School's Employability reports.

Noted

(1) Some members expressed concern at the duplication of effort required in preparing School Employability reports because it required a focus on information in reports from the Careers Centre that had already been considered by School Boards.

(2) One issue that the preparation of the Faculty's Employability overview report had highlighted was the relatively small proportion of HUM students who had contact with the Careers Centre, especially when compared with students from other Faculties.

(3) Members agreed on the need to do more to enhance students awareness of the many and valuable transferable skills they gained throughout their degree, so that they can articulate those skills and attributes more effectively in cvs, applications and interviews.

Resolved

Mr Farr undertook to post a document produced by the Graduate Employers of Norfolk Network (GENE) on the HUM LTQC Blackboard site. This examined key issues relating to the skills that employers looked for in graduates.

## **30. CCS ACADEMIC YEAR REVIEW GROUP (CCSAYRG)**

Reported

The Director of Taught Programmes had asked members of the CCSAYRG to consider answers to a number of questions relating to several key academic policies, for example ending free choice, reassessment by failed element and having part of year one contribute towards the degree classification. A fairly short

timescale had been given for this as it was going to be discussed at the meeting of the LTC on 9 December 2009.

Resolved

Mr Farr would circulate the paper outlining the questions, together with a paper giving the background to the CCSAYRG's discussions to members of the Committee. Members were requested to let Mr Farr have their views on the issues raised by 8 December so that he could feed them back to the LTC on 9 December 2010.