

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE



Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2010

Present: The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor T.B. Ward) (in the Chair), the Director of Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes (Professor C. Vincent), the Director of Taught Programmes (Professor G. Moore), the Director of Partnerships (Ms E. Towner), The Academic Registrar (Mr R. Evans), the Dean of Students (Dr A. Grant), Associate Deans (LTQC) (Mr I. Farr, Dr S. McGuire (vice Dr S Connolly), Mrs R. Doy, (vice Dr N. Spalding) and Dr N. Watmough), the Academic Officer of the Union of UEA Students (Mr D. Sheppard)* and the Student Member nominated by the Union of UEA Students (Mr R. Reynolds)* and a representative of the Graduate Students' Association (Miss S. Kim) (* except for business marked*).

With: The Head of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office (Ms A.E. Rhodes), The Director of Faculty Administration (SCI) (Mr M. McGarvie), the Assistant Registrars (Dr J. Ashman, Mr L Daly, Ms C. Gray, Ms E. Roberts and Ms M. Steele), Ms L. Morton (Manager of UEA London project) (Minute 38 refers), Mr J. Goodwin (Careers Adviser, CCEN) and Mr L. Doughty (Information Manager, CCEN) (Minute 38 refers) and Ms A. Vallins (Project Officer, Transitions into/within HE) (Minute 39 refers).

Apologies: Mr G. Sorrell (City College Rep), LTC Director of Staff Development (Mr P. Levy), Mrs C. Dobson (UCS Rep), Director of Information Services (Mr J. Colam-French), the Library Director (Mr N. Lewis), Ms H. Murdoch (Equality and Diversity Manager), Mrs S. Walker (Head of the Partnerships Office, LTQO), the Assistant Registrars (Ms C. Chan and Ms L. Ward) and Senior Administrators (Miss H. Coman, Mr S. Knock and Mr P. Vazquez).

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Dr Shawn McGuire in his capacity as Associate Dean (LTQ) in the Faculty of Social Sciences during the study leave, in Semester 2, of Dr S Connolly; Dr Rosie Doy, Faculty of Health, who was attending on behalf of Dr N Spalding, and all visitors to the Committee.

31. MINUTES

Confirmed
the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2009.

32. STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR

Reported that
(1) the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic) had been invited by Universities UK and Guild HE to join a national review group looking at the role of external examiners. Faculty Associate Deans were asked to relay this information to Schools, noting that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor would be consulting academic staff across the disciplines about the role of the external examiner in their subject area(s);

- (2) the Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Education (part of the MClined offered by the Faculty of Health) had been accredited by the Higher Education Academy as leading to Fellowship of the Academy on successful completion, thus permitting successful 2009-10 candidates to achieve Fellowship;
- (3) the HEA had announced that Mr Richard Brawn would be the University's HEA contact, vice Mr Eddie Gulc, with immediate effect. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor had written to Mr Gulc expressing the University's thanks for his support;
- (4) the date for the Learning and Teaching Day had been set for Friday 16 April, 2010 in the new Thomas Paine Study Centre. More details would be available soon. An external speaker, Professor Phil Race (Emeritus Professor for Assessment, Learning and Teaching at Leeds Metropolitan University) had accepted an invitation to give a presentation on aspects of good teaching practice and it was hoped that the Day would finish with an 'Any Questions'-style plenary session.

33. CONFIRMATION OF CHAIR'S ACTION

Confirmed

- (1) Chair's action in approving a change to the title of a new award (approved by the Committee on 9 December, 2009) from Master of Teaching and Learning (MTL) to Master in Teaching and Learning (MTL), at the request of the relevant Professional, Statutory and/or Regulatory Body;
- (2) a change to the rubric for the 'Transitions' prize to extend eligibility to postgraduate taught as well as undergraduate students.

34. PARTNERSHIPS

UEA London/INTO UEA London

Considered

- (1) a report from the UEA London Project Team. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D068);
- (2) provisional arrangements for a joint quality framework with City University for INTO courses. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D069);
- (3) a proposed amendment to the Institutional and Course Approval process (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D070).

(In discussion it was noted that:

- (i) the first cohort of students to UEA London commenced study on 18 January, 2010. The target of over 200 students was hindered by difficulties with the new visa application process overseen by the UK Borders Agency, resulting in 93 students admitted onto INTO UEA London and INTO City London programmes. The number of students taking up the offer of accommodation in Stepney was 58 (62%)

which was a higher proportion than anticipated. The situation with future cohorts would be monitored;

- (ii) UEA London continued to build its staffing profile. The newly-appointed Librarian was the first non-academic member of staff in the UK to achieve a National Teaching Fellowship Award. The aim was to seek to attract more staff of this calibre;
- (iii) more courses were due to start in the lead-up to September, 2010. The Masters in Strategic Carbon Management was experiencing a steady uptake with 10-12 students expected to commence in March, 2010. Proposals to run undergraduate courses from September, 2011, were also being considered. It was likely that the first such course would be offered by the Norwich Business School (NBS) and would be distinct from those currently run by the School. The University was currently reviewing its existing Common Course Structure Degree Regulations with an anticipated implementation date of September, 2012. It might be possible for courses at UEA London to commence under the revised regulations from 2011 rather than move students to a new regulatory framework after one year, although there were many issues still to resolve;
- (iv) some floors of the teaching building were still to be fitted. The Joint Venture Board might consider an increase in the rate of refurbishment if the number of admissions was likely to expand. Spare capacity was likely to be low, with the expectation being that the building would be worked hard for reasons of economy and efficiency. Nevertheless, it was hoped that there might be some spare capacity for one-off events but this could not be at the expense of space for regular course activities;
- (v) another post would be made available at a later date for a clerk with a specific role in finance. The work was currently handled centrally by INTO University Partnerships;
- (vi) the Committee extended congratulations to all those involved in this significant project.

RESOLVED

- (1) to adopt the proposed provisional arrangements for a joint quality framework with City University for INTO courses;
- (2) to approve changes to the planned Institutional and Course Approval process to address the likely development of undergraduate provision at UEA London and to allow the reversion to 2011 of the revalidation of INTO UEA Norwich courses subject to the inclusion of the named Advisers as part of the Panel, if they wished.

(In discussion members noted:

- (vi) that extensive discussions had taken place with City University with regard to the issues raised by the joint teaching of INTO UEA London and INTO City students such as course regulations, assessment (including grading criteria), student experience, policies and procedures, external examiner reporting and the operation of Joint Boards of Study. An approach had been developed that offered a sound basis for the operation of respective quality assurance

frameworks. Members acknowledged that this did not yet constitute a final and formal agreement and recognised that further development and refinement might be necessary, Nevertheless, they were assured that the statement of proposals were made in good faith and presented a sound basis from which to proceed. Groups of students would be monitored to see if there were differences in performance between INTO City, INTO UEA London and INTO UEA Norwich students;

- (viii) the proposal to revalidate INTO UEA Norwich courses (previously having been brought forward to 2010 to coincide with validation of INTO UEA London courses) as planned in 2011 in the light of recent revisions to these courses. Members supported the view that this model would allow the incorporation of any further planned course revisions; would provide an opportunity properly to compare and contrast Norwich and London delivery; give time for annual module monitoring and course review to take place at both sites; and benefit from external examiners' comments and student feedback from both sites.)

35. THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

HEFCE

Considered

- (i) a consultation on future arrangements for quality assurance in England and Northern Ireland. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D071)

Received

- (ii) the HEFCE Grant Announcement 2010/11 and possible implications for learning and teaching. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D072)
- (iii) Information note I -2009 -127 from Universities UK on the Secretary of State's letter to HEFCE on HE funding 2010/11. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D073)

RESOLVED

that comments on the consultation be forwarded to the Head of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office by the end of February, 2010.

(In discussion, members:

- (i) were informed that the Chair had recently attended a session in London on the future of HE, including funding matters and the role of the QAA. With regard to the future role of the QAA no clear drive or common vision had been evident at the event. The organisation appeared to want to retain the same flexibility in its remit that had resulted in five different audit methods since 1991. At worst, this could lead to institutions losing confidence in long-term planning;
- (ii) noted that the current position of the QAA passing *comment* on the accuracy of the information that HEIs publish might move to making *judgement*. Members considered that this would be an undesirable change, and strong reservation should be noted in the institutional

response. It was agreed that other matters to be part of the response should include the large number of league tables and statistics already in the public domain as part of the information available to prospective applicants, including Unistats, NSS and RAE which already attracted government funding. It was considered that the area was adequately covered and resourced and that auditors' comments were likely to be less consistent and more subjective than other alternative sources of information;

- (iii) were minded that an alternative approach to audit such as exists in the form of Ofsted inspection was undesirable. Furthermore, the Faculty of Health was already more than adequately audited via the Strategic Health Authority and a range of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory bodies. The QAA process amounted to repetition for the Schools within the Faculty;
- (iv) expressed some reservation about a reversion to graded judgements. On the one hand, this might be a useful recruitment tool but previous experience of the Teaching Quality Assessment (TQA) system had shown that audit outcomes early in a cycle tended to be more severe than later ones. The Committee was also aware of the intention to move to more contestability amongst institutions for student numbers. Furthermore, the notion of 'contestability' appeared to be premised on the assumption that there was something wrong with HE in the UK, which was unhelpful;
- (v) considered that the future role of audit with regard to comparability of academic standards was unclear;
- (vi) heard that the future of funding was also unclear and would remain so for the immediate future until the next grant letter was received (due in March). It was suggested that some Masters courses in the Faculties of Arts and Humanities and of Social Sciences could lose their HEFCE premium. This might require a strategic rethink – for example, the entire UEA HEFCE contract could be made up of undergraduate numbers. The recent paper on 'Higher Ambitions' published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills had stressed the continued importance of Foundation Degrees and had also referred to "accelerated degrees". Such a proposal might be a response to possible increases in the contribution by students to tuition fees and would also put the focus on the issue of under-used estate which universities in the United States addressed through the provision of summer schools, for example. It was likely too that more attention would be paid to part-time provision, with the current funding arrangements for part-time students likely to change. However, the impact of future funding arrangements was difficult to predict without resolution on fees paid by students – an issue that was under review.)

36. PG RESEARCH PROGRAMMES POLICY GROUP

Considered

a report of the meeting on 22 January 2010. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D9074)

RESOLVED that

- (1) the proposed revisions to the regulations, to the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and to associated policy documents with regard to the Preparation and Submission of a Thesis and to the Rules for the Form and Submission of Work to permit electronic submission, be approved. The revisions would take effect from 1 April, 2010;
- (2) the proposed revision to the Code of Practice for Research Degrees to include reference to guidance on good practice in research by funders and other relevant professional bodies, in addition to the University's own guidelines be approved, with immediate effect;
- (3) the recommendation with regard to ring-fencing of a proportion of fee income from postgraduate research students to cover training costs in the event of cessation of so-called 'Roberts' monies should not be endorsed in its current form but the principle that there should be a commitment to continued provision of training and a recognition that a way to ensure funding of it, was endorsed.

(In discussion it was noted that:

- (i) under the annual review of postgraduate research student progress - an important aspect of the relationship between student and supervisor - return rates for the reports suggested very high compliance. The figures for the Faculty of Science were not included but it was reported that they were also high, in line with the compliance rates reported by other Faculties. Members were mindful that some students withdrew without formal notification and thus a figure of 100% return rate was not a natural expectation;
- (ii) the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) was in a "gap year" which was allowing time to reflect, explore findings to date and make improvements. Schools were urged to publicise improvements and alterations as a form of feedback to students on how their comments were being used, thereby instilling a value in the survey;
- (iii) the guidelines and policy on proofreading had also been considered by the Taught Programmes Policy Group. (TPPG). The document needed further minor revisions. The policy would cover all students (undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research);
- (iv) the move to allow the electronic submission of theses required minor amendments to regulations, the Code of Practice on Research Degrees and associated policy documents. The web version of the University Calendar would be altered to meet the 1 April 2010 implementation date but the bound version would not be updated until the end of the current academic session. The revised policy and possibility of electronic submission would be applicable to all current research students but would not be retrospectively applied. Electronic versions should be available to view via ETHOS at some stage. The requirement for at least one hard copy remained in force;
- (v) so-called 'Roberts' funding for PGR training might come to an end in March, 2011. The funding had supported significant investments in training which had been a major enhancement and ways of continuing such training should be identified. The Committee heard

that the financing of continued training had not yet been resolved and would be the focus of further discussion for the Policy Group. Nevertheless, the Committee did recognise the value in the training and endorsed the strategy for its continuation. The future involvement of CSED would be considered as part of the strategy. The Committee would await further reports on this matter. Financial issues would be considered first by the Executive Team or other budgetary groups;

- (vi) the UEA's current Code of Practice on Research was broadly compliant with a recent Research Councils UK document on good practice in research. The recommendation to include a reference to guidance issued by funders and other relevant professional bodies in the University's Code of Practice on Research Degrees to strengthen the importance of good practice in research, was agreed;
- (vii) the preservation of primary data was an issue that required further discussion by the Policy Group. In some disciplines, primary data should be stored for ten or twenty years. There were some national resource centres where data were held. It was reported that Biological Sciences had a policy on data sharing and accessibility which was tied in with the allocation of research grants. Data should be archived in a way that was transparent and there was a need to be clear with whom or where responsibility lay. There was also a need to adapt the policy on grants to fit with the PGR regulations and clarification about ownership of, for example, laboratory notebooks.)

37. ACADEMIC STANDARDS : PLAGIARISM AND COLLUSION

Considered

reports on 2008-09 from School Plagiarism and Collusion Officers. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D075)

RESOLVED

that the practice of detailed annual reports from School Plagiarism and Collusion Officers being now well established, it was timely and appropriate for the detailed reports to be considered by the Taught Programmes Policy Group in the future, with a summary report to the Committee, highlighting in particular any University-level/wide issues.

(In discussion it was noted that:

- (i) the numbers of cases had slightly increased year on year from 2006-07 and that the figures were likely to be an underestimate of the total number of cases. Faculties had identified under-reporting as a direct consequence of the existing policy. The new policy on plagiarism and collusion which had come into effect from September, 2009, was likely to produce even higher figures as the new policy was less confrontational, and more supportive in cases of poor academic practice. These cases had previously been identified as areas where students needed support rather than discipline;
- (ii) some cases were not fully resolved because the student had withdrawn from the course before action could be taken/completed. There was a need to develop a process in these instances: it was

known that some students applied for readmission after not completing the disciplinary process;

- (iii) a new web-based reporting tool was being devised which would improve and standardise reporting and monitoring of cases of plagiarism and collusion. Members welcomed this development.)

38. STUDENT PROGRESSION AND EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY

Considered
reports from

- (1) the Faculty of Science (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D076)
- (2) the Faculty of Social Sciences (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D077)
- (3) the Faculty of Arts and Humanities (FTV only) (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D078)

RESOLVED that

- (1) the two-day careers event held in the School of Biological Sciences be brought to the attention of Heads of Schools as an example of good practice;
- (2) it was important that the Committee should continue to consider reports on the above but that in future, these might be in summary form, with the details to be considered by Faculty Executives.

(In discussion it was noted that:

- (i) the Faculty of Science had highlighted the success of the careers fair held by the School of Biological Sciences (BIO) early in the Autumn Semester of the final year of undergraduate study. There was no final-year teaching on the two days of the event in order to create space in the timetable for students to attend. This approach also relayed a message about the importance of focussing on careers. The day attracted a range of employers, and alumni. The representatives of the Careers Centre commended the event, giving it their full support and adding that it had produced a knock-on effect in terms of better use of the Careers Centre by BIO students. The event would be highlighted in a note to Heads of School;
- (ii) within the report from Science, CHE had recorded a comment relating to the advising system. The meaning of the comment was unclear and the Associate Dean (LTQ) indicated that he would pursue the matter with the School;
- (iii) one School in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities had reported holding a careers event which coincided with an Open Day which helped to connect the student journey from admission to employment very well. Careers was part of the learning and teaching strategy in the Faculty and thus considered to be "part of what we do" and not seen as somehow separate;
- (iv) more generally, Faculty Executives should be involved in the monitoring of employability reports as this would be a good forum for

detailed discussions of this type, with the Learning and Teaching Committee receiving a summary, thereby allowing a sharing and dissemination of experiences and good practice;

- (v) the Faculty of Social Sciences had reported an added layer of complexity in its approach to employability as the Faculty had much larger numbers of international students. International students were not yet included in HESA statistics with regard to first destination employment, although it was understood that there were plans for this to change. Furthermore, there were added difficulties in trying to address employability skills beyond UK borders. Statistics on first destinations of EU and international students would be necessary for progress to be made on this aspect;
- (vi) the Dean of Students' Office had been making improvements to the support for international students which should have an impact on the overall student experience of this group. It would be difficult to monitor the effect on employment as there were no baseline figures. A new post had been created at the University to assist with employment for international students. The post was a collaboration between DOS and CCEN in order to unite the resources available in both departments when assisting individuals.)

39. LTC REVIEWS

Considered

reports on the following reviews of:

- (1) Common Course Structure Degree regulations. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D079)
- (2) Disciplinary Procedures. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D080)
- (3) Professional Misconduct and/or Unsuitability procedures. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D081)
- (4) Transitions. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D082)

RESOLVED

- (1) that the Review Group for the Common Course Structure Degree Regulations should continue with its consultation meetings and, should continue to explore the issue of introducing a Grade Point Average Scheme (in addition to the retention of the honours classification system) and proposals regarding the management of assessments within the new regulations;
- (2) that the principles of the revised policy and procedures in respect of Student Discipline be supported;
- (3) to thank the Project Officer, 'Transitions into/within HE' for her detailed report of progress and the insights that the project had produced to date.

(In discussion, members:

With regard to the Common Course Structure Degree Regulations

- (i) heard that the Director of Taught Programmes and colleagues were in the process of meeting members of all four Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees as well as Faculty Admissions Managers, members of the central Admissions Office and members of the Student Information System team. The two Faculties already visited had expressed their broad favour of the agreed principles of the new regulations, in particular the principles that students would have to pass every module to progress to the next Stage (albeit with some 'condoned' progression) and that reassessment would not be an automatic right;
- (ii) noted that September, 2012, was still the planned implementation date for revised CCS regulations. It was envisaged that detailed regulations would be presented to Senate for approval by December, 2010, in order to meet this timescale. This should mean that the undergraduate prospectus for entry in 2012 – which was due to be finalised in the autumn of 2010 – should be able to reflect the spirit if not all the details of the new regulations. There were still some major issues to resolve, such as whether the first year of undergraduate study should count towards the degree classification. Another issue was whether the University should introduce a Grade Point Average system alongside the degree classification system as a way of addressing concerns about rewarding students who do well in Year 1 and about improving the engagement of other students who currently aim to achieve a pass. Two Faculties had already been consulted and had endorsed further exploration. The GPA, as a simple metric, had the potential to create another benchmark for students, with every item of assessment counting in equal measure. There was no current requirement to have such a facility nor was there a national standard for the use of GPA. Arguments for its adoption included its being a transferable and well-understood international currency in academic terms. If GPA were adopted, it should be a simple system with no standardisation or normalisation. Dickenson College (USA) with which the University had strong academic links, used just such a transparent scheme which acknowledged subject differences. GPA would not replace the degree classification system at UEA but would be used as a tool for additional information which could have benefits in employability, and could also be used internally for prizes and scholarships. Universities in the British Commonwealth were already running degree classifications and GPAs in parallel in order to help graduates with further study and employment in countries around the world;
- (iii) discussed other options such as making yearly averages visible via the transcript. (It was noted that in calculating the figure for final classification, the years were weighted). It was reported that employers often sought a five-point grade that would further distinguish between students' performance. It was acknowledged that the GPA could serve this purpose, and could be given by year of study in order to show progression. Concern was expressed about visiting students whose GPA in their home University might be calculated on a different basis and how any differences might affect the overall outcome of their studies. Exchange schemes already

operated conversion schemes to deal with such a situation. In applications for research places, it was noted that a variety of GPAs are presented. This was recently discussed at a meeting of the Association of Commonwealth Universities without particular concern;

- (iv) were informed that consideration was being given to possible new approaches to the management of assessments under the new framework. One possibility was for the internal and external moderation process at module level to be signed off by the Chair of the Examination Board after thorough and appropriate scrutiny. This would mean that the process of scaling marks would be removed;
- (v) on the matter of how the University should describe module levels, it was noted that a straw poll of other HEIs revealed sixteen out of seventeen respondents either currently used the FHEQ level numbers (ie levels 4 to 8 covering HE) or were moving to it. If the University were to adopt these numbers rather than retaining the existing numbers 1 to 3 (albeit equivalent), it would be expensive in terms of implementation as the Student Information System would have to be developed, particularly to ensure validation of data for HESA returns, and could mean a delay in the introduction of the new Common Course Structure Degree Regulations;

With regard to the Review of Disciplinary Procedures

- (vi) were informed that the reviews of disciplinary and professional misconduct and/or unsuitability procedures had been finding common ground, and the first meeting of the resultant merged group had recently taken place.

With regard to disciplinary offences, the principle that disciplinary breaches be couched in three levels as per the new policy and procedure for plagiarism and collusion, had been accepted. The level of an offence would take the context of the breach into account. A level three offence, for example, would result in a referral to the Senate Disciplinary Committee (SDC). A corresponding series of indicative penalties would be identified, although the Senate Discipline Committee would retain discretion. The merged meeting had also discussed the draft document for the nomination and approval of Chairs and Members of the SDC but agreed that the proposals required further revision. This would be done as quickly as possible as the new procedure was due for implementation from September, 2010, and the process of seeking members would need to start soon to ensure everything was in place, including training of appointed members, for the planned implementation date. The potential administrative burden of the new process was raised, particularly with reference to checking suitability of nominated persons. It was agreed that the nomination form would include indicators of the criteria for nomination. Members also noted that two sub-groups had been established to consider non-academic disciplinary matters and penalties available to the SDC (see above).

The review of Professional Misconduct and/or Unsuitability was ongoing, with a number of principles identified (for example, in relation to length of time that an allegation should remain on file in the event that no prima facie case had been established) and issues to be

resolved (such as whether the preliminary investigation would be conducted under the auspices of the Head of School or of the SDC);

With regard to the 'Transitions' into/within HE project

- (vii) heard that the 'Transitions' project was due to be completed at the end of the current academic session. The Project Officer had over the course of three years become a resource for academic staff enabling the sharing of good practice, experience and ideas. Aspects of the project such as study skills, induction events and employability with a focus at both undergraduate and taught Masters level were now becoming embedded in the curriculum. Striking examples of the type of work now being embedded included the peer learning project in the School of Mathematics, induction processes and work around the University on PGT dissertations:
- the induction process remained very variable across the University, often necessarily, but successes and good practice was now being shared;
 - the transition phase at undergraduate level would become particularly important if the University decided to make any aspect of the first year count toward degree classification. (This point was made by Faculty Managers for Admissions at a separate meeting);
 - peer learning was an important aspect of the student learning process which had previously not been fully embraced. The possibility of collusion could be a barrier to the process, but peer learning was a natural aspect of student life that should be accepted and understood. Getting students involved in teaching helped them to learn;
 - a form had been developed to assist the process for the PGT dissertation, serving as the basis of an agreement between supervisor and supervisee so that students understand what they can expect from themselves and their supervisor. The Faculty of Health had been using for some time a similar procedure to the one being commended by the University for adoption. The form had been developed in response to a concern raised by the Union of UEA Students in its written submission to the QAA as part of the audit process.)

40. FACULTY ASSOCIATE DEANS (LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY)

Received

minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee:

FOH (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D083)
SCI (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D084)
SSF (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D085)

Noted

oral reports

(In discussion it was reported that:

- (i) the Faculty of Health was harmonising fitness to practise processes across the Faculty, and was in discussion with the School of Pharmacy in SCI about the same. E-learning was also being elevated to an area of high importance with exploration of possible aspects for development being discussed by a focus group. Developments would be reported;
- (ii) the Faculty of Science had supported in principle two new courses: one in sustainable agriculture and one in molecular medicine. The detail in the course proposals required another critical read by the Faculty LTQC prior to formal report to the Learning and Teaching Committee;
- (iii) the Faculty of Social Sciences used a system of red, amber and green with regard to the status of external examiner reports and responses. Members made favourable comments on this approach;
- (iv) the Faculty of Art and Humanities had not held another meeting since the last LTC. This raised the general issue of the synchronisation of meetings in the annual cycle. It was agreed that Faculty ADs should receive a draft copy of the Almanac as early notification of events would be helpful for planning the timing of meetings.)

41. TAUGHT PROGRAMMES POLICY GROUP

Considered

- (1) a report of the meeting of TPPG on 13 January 2010 on:

- Reporting of Marks and Aggregates to Assessment Boards
- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)
- Feedback on Coursework
- Draft Policy on the Use of Proof Readers
- Draft Procedure for Teaching and Assessing near relatives of members of academic and administrative staff
- Guidance for Viva Voce Examinations

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D086)

Noted

- (2) a report published June, 2009 by the Higher Education Academy on:

'Increasing the quality of feedback on assignments while altering student perceptions of good feedback based on their school experience'. The Executive Summary is attached (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D087)

The full report can be found via the web link below:

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/resources/publications/Jones_Final_Report.pdf

LTC09M004

LTC-M14
03.02.2009
Min. 41

Considered

- (3) Course Closure procedure (this item was deferred from the December LTC meeting) (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D055)

RESOLVED

- (1) that the Guidance Note on the conduct of viva voce examinations be approved with immediate effect;
- (2) to convey the Committee's thanks and congratulations to Dr Harriet Jones on the publication by the Higher Education Academy of a report on feedback to students;
- (3) to approve in principle the new procedure covering course closure and to vest in the Chair authority to approve any minor amendments to the document.

(In discussion it was noted that:

- (i) viva voce examinations were only used by some Schools within the Faculty of Science. The guidance document had been developed in consultation with the Faculty, building on and formalising existing practice, and was intended to supplement the provisions of the Regulations and Instructions to Examiners and to provide a framework for providing information to students. The Faculty of Science was continuing to consider the role of viva voce examinations. It was noted that perceptions of the course should not be part of the viva: external examiners should glean this evidence in other ways. Discussions might lead to further clarity on how external examiners should engage with students. It was reported that students in the Faculty wished to retain the viva process in principle although clarity about the reasons for being called and why provisional marks were not released at the viva needed to be managed. (It was noted that no students were given provisional information ahead of the meeting of the Final Board and equity of treatment had to be maintained). There were plans for an equality impact assessment of anonymous coursework marking (which will include marks for two years before anonymous coursework marking was adopted and two years after the advent of the new system). The Policy Group would draw upon this evidence in considering whether anonymised Boards might be an appropriate development. Anonymised Boards might not be at odds with the viva process.
- (ii) the Policy Group had been considering case studies on the effectiveness of feedback on student work. In this regard, the presentation by Dr Harriet Jones of the School of Biological Sciences, of a report on feedback funded and recently published by the Higher Education Academy, had been extremely valuable. There was much to draw on at the University. As a result, a sub-group would be developing a set of basic principles of feedback to students on assessed work for consideration at the Policy Group's meeting in June, 2010. Faculty Associate Deans had also been asked to discuss the issues with their respective Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees, to identify examples of good practice, to consider students' perceptions of feedback and possible mechanisms for discussing their expectations, to collect examples of feedback pro formas and to formulate action plans;

- (iii) the on-going discussions (reported under Minute 39 above), concerning the adoption of Grade Point Averages, draft policies on the use of proof-readers and on the teaching and assessment of near relatives of members of staff;
- (iv) the University would once again be participating in the national Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) which would be co-ordinated by the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office;
- (v) the Director of Taught Programmes had advised the Policy Group that it had not been practicable to implement revised regulations regarding the reporting of marks to Assessment Boards. The Student Information System (SIS) had not been able to deliver the revised format and testing of a possible alternative reporting mechanism had identified that significant resource would be required to address the issue. Given that new regulations were under development for implementation from 2012-13, it seemed sensible to defer the amendments to the reporting of marks until then, thus avoiding two substantial re-writes within SIS. The Director would be writing to Boards of Examiners and their Chairs who in turn would be asked to brief external examiners;
- (vi) the item on course closures had been deferred from the December, 2009, meeting of the Committee. The process drew on one originally developed in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities when that Faculty undertook a systematic review of its suite of courses. The QAA Code of Practice: Programme approval, monitoring and review (precept 9) recommended that institutions have in place procedures for withdrawing courses, which ensured that the interests of continuing students and those who had applied to the course were protected, but this had not to date been explicitly addressed within the University's own Codes of Practice. Concern was expressed that evaluations of course viability based purely on the business case might impact on particular groups of students, hence the inclusion of an impact assessment process with regard to equality and diversity. It was noted that the numbers of students on a course was a natural starting point in the process but attention should also be paid to issues such as course transfers. Including Admissions in the course closure process was important as this provides assistance with issues regarding widening participation and other potential impacts.

The process should be about refreshing portfolios and not extending them without reference to wider considerations).

42. ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE : UEA TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS

To consider

a report of UEA Teaching Fellowships awarded for 2009-10 (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D088)

LTC09M004

LTC-M16
03.02.2009
Min. 43

43. PARTNERSHIP OFFICE ACTIVITY

Considered

a report concerning:

- (i) Easton College Institutional Review
- (ii) Report from the meeting of the University Campus Suffolk Joint Academic Committee held on 26 November 2009
- (iii) List of Current Partnership Agreements
- (iv) City College Norfolk Regulatory Framework
- (v) City College Norfolk Mitigating Circumstances and Special Allowances Policy

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D089)

RESOLVED

that the recommendations contained in the report relating to (1) validation of new provision and to changes in course title at University Campus Suffolk (Bury St Edmonds and Otley), (2) a requirement that Faculty Offices notify the Partnerships Office of any potential developments, (3) the updated City College Norfolk Regulatory Framework and to (4) City College's Mitigating Circumstances and Special Allowances Policy, be approved.

(A list of current Partnerships Agreements was well received).

44. PARTNERSHIPS

Received

a report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D090)

45. CONCESSION AND APPROVALS

Received

- (1) a report on concessions approved since the last report to Committee.
(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D091)
- (2) an overview of concessions approved between 2003-4 to 2008-09
(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D092)

46. QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY

Reported

that the Agency had published

- (1) a **revised Introduction** to academic credit in higher education in England.

(This may be consulted at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/news/media/pressReleases/101209.asp>)

- (2) a **Mini guide**: a brief student guide to Institutional audit

(This may be consulted at:

http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/institutionalAudit/IA_student_miniguide.pdf)

- (3) **Institutional audit:** a guide for student representatives
(This may be consulted at:
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/institutionalAudit/IA_studentRepGuide.pdf)
- (4) **Rethinking the values of higher education consumption, partnership, community?**
By Wes Streeting, President, and Graeme Wise, Political Officer,
National Union of Students
(This may be consulted at:
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/students/studentEngagement/Rethinking.pdf>)
- (5) **Rethinking the values of higher education - the student as collaborator and producer?
Undergraduate research as a case study**
Dr Paul Taylor and Danny Wilding,
The Reinvention Centre for Undergraduate Research,
University of Warwick
(This may be consulted at:
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/students/studentEngagement/Undergraduate.pdf>)
- (6) **Final revised statement for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, food and consumer sciences and draft revised statement for architecture (CL15/09)**
(This may be consulted at:
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/news/circularLetters/CL1509.asp>)
- (7) **The Listed Bodies Order (CI17/09)**
(To which the University had to reply by the end of January, 2010. It may be consulted at:
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/news/circularLetters/CL1709.asp>)

47. BOLOGNAReported
that:

- (1) the University had been invited by the UUK's Europe Unit to submit a brief case study/studies for consideration for inclusion in the UK HE sector publication celebrating 10 years of the Bologna process in the UK and EHEA. The publication would be launched to coincide with the Bologna Ministerial Conference in Vienna and Budapest on 11-12 March, 2010
- (2) the University had submitted a case study in respect of The European Masters in Applied Ecology, supported by EU ERASMUS funding in which the School of Environmental Sciences' MSc in Applied Ecology participates. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D093)