

LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE



Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 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), LTC Director of Staff Development (Mr P. Levy), the Dean of Students (Dr A. Grant), Associate Deans (LTQC) (Mr I Farr, Professor R Kaye (vice Dr S McGuire), Dr N. Spalding and Dr N. Watmough), Mr G. Sorrell (City College Rep), the Academic Officer of the Union of UEA Students (Mr D. Sheppard)** and representatives of the Graduate Students' Association, Mr O. Oluseyi Fagbola** and Miss S. Kim** (except for business marked**).

With: The Head of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office (Ms A.E. Rhodes), Project Manager, UEA London (L. Morton) for Minute 51, The Director of Faculty Administration (SCI) (Mr M. McGarvie), the Library Director (Mr N. Lewis), the Assistant Registrars (Dr J. Ashman, Mr L Daly, Ms C. Gray, Ms E. Roberts, Ms M. Steele, and Ms L. Ward).

Apologies: Dr S. McGuire (Associate Dean, LTQ, SSF), Mr R. Evans (Academic Registrar), Mrs C. Dobson (UCS rep), Ms H. Murdoch (Equality and Diversity Manager) and Mrs S. Walker (Head of the Partnerships Office, LTQO).

48. MINUTES

Confirmed

the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2010.

49. STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

Reported that

- (1) the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) would be running again this year at UEA from 12 April to 28 May, 2010. Postgraduate students would be emailed with a link to the survey. It was hoped to achieve a greater response rate this year compared with the 12.6% response rate in 2009. The Associate Deans and GSA were asked to help promote the survey;
- (2) the HEFCE grant letter had been received showing a decrease in total funding compared to last year. In particular Research Degree Programme funding showed a decrease of 15-20% and the capital budget a decrease of 15%. The need to continue to protect the student experience and academic capacity was reiterated;
- (3) the exams timetable had been published. There were this year 623 examinations, 8000 candidates and 30,000 sittings between 4 May and 3 June, 2010. For the first time, three venues would be in operation throughout: Congregation Hall, Blackdale and the Arts building. Further complexity in timetabling arises from free choice; constraints of room sizes and suitability of rooms; group sizes; and

timetabling three hour exams. In addition, examinations would be running for the first time at UEA London. Associate Deans were asked to assist in helping to spread understanding about the scale and complexity of the task and in managing expectations on the part of students and staff regarding the timetable. Members were also asked to reflect on assessment strategies, noting that the business cost of assessment was significant. The forthcoming Learning and Teaching Day on 16 April included two presentations on aspects of assessment;

- (4) a reminder would be sent to Heads of School that lectures and seminars should start at five past the hour and finish at five to the hour.

50. CONFIRMATION OF CHAIR'S ACTION

Confirmed

Chair's action in approving the following new prize regulations:

AMS: The Joe Greenwell Scholarship
(Tabled at the meeting and filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D114).

51. PARTNERSHIPS

Considered

- (1) a report on City College Norwich: New Course Proposals. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D094)
 - (2) UEA London/INTO UEA London
- an oral report from the UEA London Project Manager

RESOLVED

to give approval in principle to the following City College Norwich (CCN) new course proposals which would now be allowed to proceed to validation:

- (i) BA (Hons) Applied Sport, Health and Exercise
- (ii) FdA Media Practice

(In their discussion of the above items it was noted that:

With regard to the CCN new course proposals

- i. the proposed award of BA (Hons) Applied Sport, Health and Exercise had the backing of the School of Education and Lifelong Learning and would build upon the existing Foundation degrees in this area.
- ii. the FdA Media Practice was a restructuring of the existing FdA programme in Media into two programmes, the other programme to be an FdA in Journalism. The Faculty of Arts and Humanities had indicated no areas of concern regarding this proposal.

With regard to UEA London

- iii. the first set of Masters students had started at the London Study Centre on 16 March, 2010. The MBA in Strategic Carbon Management had met its targets with nine students.
- iv. UEA London continued to build its staffing profile. The Academic Support Manager had commenced on 8 March, 2010 and an Executive Programme Co-ordinator had been recruited to administer the London NBS programmes. The position of London Academic Director for the INTO programmes was currently being advertised.
- v. the INTO UEA London Fast Track Foundation programme had been approved and an INTO UEA Extended Foundation programme was under development. The business case and revised programme specification for the MA in Creative Entrepreneurship had been received and approval would be considered at the next LTC. The Masters programme in Data Mining for Financial Services was expected from the School of Computing Sciences after Easter.

The Norwich Business School's (NBS) BSc programme in International Business Management was currently under development for Year 2 and 3 delivery. The first cohort would be international students only and would enter Year 2 in 2011-12 after undertaking the International Diploma in 2010-11. Following the Executive Team's decision that the programme would recruit Home/EU as well as International students, from 2011-12 Home/EU students and any direct-entry international students would enter Year 1 of the proposed degree programme (noting that the Year 1 specification would be subsequently developed).

Further discussions were currently being held in NBS regarding the course structure and there would be an extraordinary meeting of the Faculty of Social Sciences' Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee in April, 2010 to consider the Year 2/3 paperwork. There would also be the first of two meetings of an Institutional Approval Panel on 19 April 2010 to ratify UEA London (including INTO UEA London) institutional arrangements (as provisionally approved in autumn 2009) and to consider the suitability of UEA London to offer undergraduate provision (in respect of which the proposed programme specification would be distributed to LTC for its meeting on 21 April, 2010). The second meeting of an Institutional Approval Panel meeting would take place at UEA London on 27 April 2010).

52. ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE (1) : INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Considered

an oral report and presentation from the Dean of Students.

Reported

- (1) that the Dean of Students' Office had conducted a survey in 2009 of students and staff regarding international students' English language and academic skills development. The survey also covered the perceived effectiveness of the advice and guidance provided at UEA. 169 staff and 335 international students had responded and 72 nationalities were represented.

The key findings with regards to English language skills were that students from Asian language backgrounds were most likely to have difficulties with English language skills, that participation in seminars and writing presented the greatest challenges and that the initial IELTS entry score had a long-lasting impact. Students cited lecturers and supervisors, the Dean of Students' Office and fellow students as their highest rated sources of language advice.

Recommendations from the survey included that diagnostic exercises and intensive tuition should be provided on entry, that the English Language Support Programme (ELSP) should be developed to match more specifically student need, including discipline specific provision, and that peer support initiatives and opportunities for social interaction with UK peers should be expanded.

The key findings with regards to academic study skills were that the areas seen by students as causing the greatest difficulty were challenging the views of others, understanding what was expected in assignments, structuring assignments, developing laboratory skills, taking notes and understanding referencing conventions. 74% of staff said that understanding plagiarism was an area of significant concern, compared with 14% of students. The highest rated sources of academic skills advice were lecturers/supervisors, fellow students, individual DOS tutorials and ELSP classes.

Recommendations included the provision of an intensive introduction to study within induction programmes, the further development of peer mentoring programmes, the development of guidance materials and web resources on UK academic cultures and expectations and further guidance for staff on teaching international students.

The full report of the 2009 research on academic and English language skills development is available on the Survey Office web pages on DOS website at:

https://www.uea.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.131732!int_student_survey.pdf

- (2) In 2009-10, the Dean of Students had also undertaken a UKCISA-funded project to enhance social interaction between home and international students, which involved observational research during the arrivals period and a web survey of home and international students' social behaviours and interactions. There were 1200 responses to the web survey (73% home students, 27% international and EU).

The survey findings were that students from Schools with a high proportion of international students were the least likely to spend much of their time talking to native English speakers. The key influences on making friends were studying on the same course or living together.

Preliminary project outcomes have been the revision of the international orientation and home arrivals programmes to include specific opportunities for social interaction over the arrivals period, with cultural awareness training to be provided for all student helpers.

A report on the Socialisation project will be available on the Survey Office web pages later in the year.

- (3) Recent developments in DOS have been the appointment, in August 2009, of a Careers Adviser for International Students and the appointment of a new Learning Enhancement Tutor from January, 2010 to offer individual guidance to students on developing their English language skills and to develop web- and paper-based resources and workshop approaches. The responsibility for co-ordinating INTO English language and DOS language and academic skills provision had now passed to DOS, and an 'Internationalisation' special interest group has been established.

53. ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE (2): THE ADVISING SYSTEM

Considered
an oral report from the Dean of Students.

Reported
that the Dean of Students Office had conducted a survey in 2009 of satisfaction with the advising system. 1357 students had responded – 1164 undergraduates and 193 postgraduates. 33% of the undergraduates were in their first year of study, 29% in their second year. Students aged 22-25 years old and those with disabilities gave significantly lower mean satisfaction levels for personal support than their peers. The key predictors of student satisfaction with the advising system were frequency of meetings and being invited to a meeting by the adviser; the timing of meetings was much less important.

RESOLVED
that the survey of the advising system should be undertaken every other year.

(In discussion it was noted that:

- (i) key issues should be investigated from the School or Faculty perspective but members did not feel that it would be helpful for students to be asked to name their individual advisers in future surveys;
- (ii) the Postgraduate Research Programmes Policy Group would review its decision in November, 2008, not to recommend the appointment of advisers for research students in addition to the pastoral support provided by supervisors and School Directors of Postgraduate Research).

54. ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE (3): LEARNING AND TEACHING DAY

Considered
arrangements for the Learning and Teaching Day on Friday 16 April 2010.
(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D096)

(In discussion, members:
were informed that this year's Learning and Teaching Day would be held in the Thomas Paine Study Centre. New developments this year were that there would be two keynote presentations (including from an external presenter) and a plenary discussion at the end of the programme. LTC members were encouraged to attend and to promote the event. A pull-out leaflet containing the programme would be included in the next edition of Broadview).

55. SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY: FITNESS TO PRACTISE

Considered

a report on the first year of operation of the above, in accordance with a resolution of the Committee when the Fitness to Practise procedure was first approved. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D097)

RESOLVED

to approve revised procedures for the conduct of the Fitness to Practice Panel.

(In discussion it was reported that:

only minor changes had been made to the Fitness to Practice procedures, which were working well. The Nursing and Midwifery Council had indicated that it was satisfied with the procedures. Members agreed that it might be useful to use the Student Concern form as a model for non-academic disciplinary cases).

56. RESIDENCE WITHIN 50KM RULE

Considered

whether the current requirement for full-- time students not living in University residences to be resident within a 50 kilometre radius of the University should be removed.

RESOLVED

that the requirement for full-time students not living in University residences to be resident within a 50 kilometre radius of the University should be retained, but would need to be amended to take into account students registered at UEA London.

(In discussion it was noted that:

- (i) The Human Resources Division had introduced a new rule for staff which omitted reference to a specified radius, but made the following requirement: "it is expected that all staff will be available on campus to carry out their duties during the working week in support of these goals" (*viz teaching and research*). The Student Accommodation Regulations currently state that: "except with the approval of the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) of their Faculty, full-time students not living in University residences shall live within a 50-kilometre radius of University Plain."
- (ii) there was no general support for removing the requirement for students but it needed to be better articulated to joining students. The requirement should be explicit in the prospectus and at the point of offer. Members agreed that it might best sit within the General Regulations for students rather than in the Accommodation Regulations as at present. Any exceptions to this rule would continue to be considered by concession).

57. ACADEMIC STANDARDS: REVIEW OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS' REPORTS

Considered

a draft report to Senate on External Examiners' reports 2005-6, 2006-7 and 2007-8 (taught programmes) and 2008-09 (postgraduate research programmes). (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D098)

RECOMMENDED

that the report be presented to Senate for endorsement.

(In their consideration, members:

- (i) welcomed the in-depth review of external examiners' reports in respect of undergraduate and taught postgraduate provision for specific Schools (one from each Faculty) on a rolling basis by the Director of Taught Programmes and the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office. This was in addition to the annual review and consideration undertaken by Schools and Faculties, including students' representatives on relevant School and Faculty Committees and School Boards, as set out in the UEA Code of Practice on the External Examining System (Taught Programmes);
- (ii) noted that the report also included an overview of examiners' reports on postgraduate research degree theses, which had been considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee in December, 2009;
- (iii) concluded that the process was robust and that comments in the examiners' reports were indicative of a clear position of confidence in the quality of students' academic experience and the academic standards of degrees at the University. Issues raised in the reports included the provision of information, use of the full range of marks and the relationship between marks and marking criteria. It was noted that the Taught Programmes Policy Group and the Common Course Structure Review Group were looking at module and course assessment criteria, and that proposals for feedback to students would be developed by June, 2010;
- (iv) were informed that, in accordance with usual practice, the report (if endorsed by Senate) would be made publicly available.)

58. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT: NEW COURSE APPROVALS AND PROCESS

Considered

- (1) approval in principle for two new course proposals from the School of Biological Sciences for an MSc in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security and an MSc in Molecular Medicine. (Copies are filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D099)
- (2) a report on an audit of new courses approved by the Associate Deans and Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D100)

RESOLVED

to give approval in principle to the MSc in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security and the MSc in Molecular Medicine.

(In discussion it was noted that:

- (i) the programme specifications for the two new course proposals were in draft form and the Faculty of Science's Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (SCI LTQC) was still finalising the details. It was anticipated that recruitment would be largely of international students. Consultations would take place with the Schools of Medicine, Health Policy and Practice and of Pharmacy and external views would be sought prior to the next consideration at SCI LTQC. The final version of the programme specifications would be tabled at the meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee in June;
- (ii) it was clear that there was evidence of robust scrutiny of new course proposals by Faculties, including critical dialogue between Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees and Schools. Evidence of full consideration of resource implications, including liaison with all internal stakeholders, could be improved. It was anticipated that the implementation of SITS Process Manager would assist this aspect of consideration of new course proposals. Delays in its implementation had led to some variations in the application of the new course approval process between Faculties but it was anticipated that the further guidance required would be available through the roll-out of Process Manager in 2010/11.)

59. LTC REVIEWS

Considered

oral reports on the following reviews of:

- (1) Common Course Structure Degree regulations.
- (2) Professional Misconduct and/or Unsuitability procedures.
- (3) Disciplinary Procedures.

(In discussion it was reported that:

With regard to the review of the Common Course Structure Degree Regulations

- (i) the Executive Team had agreed that Year 1 would not count towards undergraduate students' degree classification;
- (ii) Senate had approved the principles put forward to it that would underpin the eventual revised regulations;
- (iii) there were some outstanding issues such as the issue of condoned failure / condoned progression. This would be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee;

With regard to the Professional Misconduct and Disciplinary Procedures reviews

- (iv) the Review Groups for the review of Professional Misconduct and/or Unsuitability procedures and Disciplinary Procedures had been merged. A principles paper would be tabled at the next meeting for endorsement

by the Committee. It was hoped that revised procedures would be put into place for the next academic year;

- (v) Senate had endorsed the proposed approach to the appointment of a larger pool of members of a revised Senate Discipline Committee and the re-appointment, for a further session, of the current Chair, Professor Nigel Norris.)

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

Received

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

HUM (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D101)
SCI (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D102)
SSF (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D103)
FOH (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D104)

Received

an oral update on Programme Reviews in SCI 2008/9

(This item was deferred to the meeting of the Committee on 21 April, 2010.)

Considered

oral reports

(In discussion it was noted that:

- (i) the Faculty of Health (Schools of Nursing and Midwifery and of Allied Health Professions) had successfully undergone review under the new Quality Assurance Framework (which replaced major review) with its Norfolk Trust partners. For this, the Faculty and its partners had been required to prepare an Education Quality Self-Assessment Document (EQuAD) The outcome judgements of the Strategic Health Authority were that it was satisfied with Management and Quality Risk Assurance (with one condition regarding an amendment to the Ethical Framework for Concerns policy), considered Recruitment and Retention to be very good and Partnerships to be effective. The partners were commended for their honest and open approach to the review process. Input from the Dean of Students' Office and support of students with dyslexia being carried from the University policy into Norfolk NHS organisations' policies were identified as examples of good practice;
- (ii) further meetings with a range of staff and students' representatives would be held to discuss semester dates for 2014-15 onwards and the mechanism for determining these;
- (iii) the Executive Team had agreed that requests to survey students (from staff, students and outside organisations) should be made through the Surveys Office to regulate the number of times students were surveyed.)

LTC09M005

LTC-M10
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61. TAUGHT PROGRAMMES POLICY GROUP

Considered
a report on:

Student Surveys
Assessment of Group Work
(*This item was deferred to the meeting of the Committee on 21 April 2010*).
Delayed Assessment / Provisional Progression
Scaling of Marks

(A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D105)

- Considered
- (1) Guidelines on Proof Reading. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D106)
 - (2) Revisions to the Instructions to Examiners for the Common Course Structure and to the Instructions to Examiners for Integrated masters programmes regarding the scaling of marks. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D107)

RESOLVED

- (1) to approve the proposals for amendments to the Instructions to Examiners for the CCS and to the Instructions to Examiners for Integrated masters programmes regarding the scaling of marks.
- (2) that comments on the Guidelines on Proof Reading should be forwarded to the Director of Taught Programmes and that subsequent to this they would be considered for approval under Chair's action.

62. PARTNERSHIPS

Considered
a report on City College Norwich's academic appeals procedure (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D108)

RESOLVED

to approve the revised academic appeals procedure.

63. HEFCE CONSULTATION

Considered
the University's response to the HEFCE consultation on 'Future arrangements for quality assurance in England and Northern Ireland.' (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTQ09D109)

Reported
that the University's response was made to HEFCE on 4th March 2010.

64. STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE

Received

a report of the meeting held on 17 February 2010 (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D110)

65. PARTNERSHIPS

Received

a report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D111)

66. CONCESSIONS AND APPROVALS

Received

a report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D112)

67. NEW COURSE PROPOSALS

Received

a report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC09D113)

68. QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY

Reported

that the Agency had published

(1) revisions to the following sections of its Code of Practice:

(i) Section 3: Disabled students

(This may be consulted at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section3/Section3Disabilities2010.pdf>)

(ii) Section 8 of Code of practice, Section 8: Career education, information, advice and guidance.

(This may be consulted at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section8/Section8careereducation2010.pdf>)

(2) three discussion papers regarding the QAA Evaluation of the Academic Infrastructure

(These may be consulted at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/evaluation10/>)