

LTC11D035

Title: Faculty Associate Deans (Learning, Teaching and Quality)
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Issue

To receive the minutes of the Faculty of Science Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting held on 11 November 2011.

Recommendation

None.

Resource Implications

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity

Not applicable.

Timing of decisions

Not applicable.

Further Information

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Background

Not applicable.

Discussion

Not applicable.

LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2011 to discuss implementation of the New Academic Model.

Present: Dr Ben Milner (Chair), Dr Alan Bond (ENV), Dr Geoff McKeown (CMP), Professor David Evans (MTH), Dr Helen James (BIO), Dr Nigel Clayden (CHE), Dr Paul Grassby (PHA).

Dr Ben Milner (BM) stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss preparations for the implementation of the New Academic Model (NAM). The specific points that BM wished to cover in the meeting were:

1. To see how schools are progressing with moving towards NAM
2. Identify any problems
3. To make each other aware of what is happening across SCI
4. To make sure NatSci still works in the NAM
5. To discuss completion of the form detailing how each course will be revised to meet the requirements of the NAM.

BM confirmed that the NAM would come into effect for first year students from the start of academic year 2013/4.

BM asked all the attendees to provide an update on their School's progress with preparing for the NAM implementation and completing the form

Computing Science

Dr Geoff McKeown (GM) stated that most modules were already 20 or 40 credits. The exception was Imaging and Multimedia BSc course which had some 30 credit optional modules in the third year. These modules were currently run by the Film and Television School so CMP would be liaising with them about this. The School were planning to produce an add on for these modules to make them up to 40 credits. The School were not planning to introduce any new modules specifically for the NAM and were hoping to have all the changes in place by the start of 2012/3.

CMP still needed to review the three Business Computing courses that were delivered with NBS. Timescales were short for doing this as prospectus info for the 2013 intake was required before Christmas 2011. However significant changes shouldn't be required to these programmes as modules were currently 20 credits.

Mathematics

Professor Evans (DE) stated that the first year had been reorganised so that all modules were worth 20 credits. This had been done through combining 10 credit modules to form 20 credit modules.

A 10 credit project module was currently available to second and third year students which the School still wanted to offer. It was currently considering how to incorporate this into the NAM.

All 20 credit MTH modules were year long apart from third year modules which were semester long.

Environmental Science

Dr Alan Bond (AB) stated that he felt the process being followed was missing the usual democratic procedure for course changes because of the tight timescales in which the NAM was being implemented. While he welcomed the changes included in the NAM the timing, when considering the REF, was not allowing the process to be completed properly.

All first year profiles had been reviewed and 10 credit modules had been changed to 20 credits. Subsequent years were less of an issue as courses consisted mostly of 20 credit modules. Amendments to the second year courses would be looked at properly next year.

The biggest issue was BSc Environmental Sciences. Free choice was currently a significant component of the course, and the School were working to replace this with defined choice.

AB stated that reducing summative assessment and increasing the volume of formative assessment was going to be a significant change for ENV and that it would take some time for the School to adjust to this.

Chemistry

Dr Nigel Clayden (NC) stated that the School currently had some 10 credit modules which it was looking to combine or phase out. Modules would continue to be a mixture of semester and year long as timings of modules could not change because of the lack of availability of labs.

Both the Pharmaceutical Chemistry and Chemistry with Analytical Science courses would be closed due to low student numbers.

The Course Directors had made little progress with the form because they are still considering what revisions to make to second, third and fourth years. While the School have decided which 10 credit modules will be discontinued and combined they are still considering the detail of the module content.

The School are currently going through the process of switching from summative to formative assessment.

Biology

Dr Helen James (HJ) stated that the School had already reduced summative and increased formative assessment last summer. Only the first year programmes contained 10 credit modules so no changes were required to the second or third year. The School had not finalised how it was going to structure the first year yet but was currently considering this. BIO was considering amalgamating some degree programmes as it had a high number of different courses.

Pharmacy

Dr Paul Grassby (PG) reported that the School only had one programme in which all modules were compulsory. The course was due for reaccreditation next year which fitted well with consideration of revisions for the NAM. 10 credit modules would be combined to form 20 credit modules. PHA had no issues with reducing summative assessment and increasing formative. The School was aiming to implement the changes for 2012/3.

General Comments

- BM said that where Schools were using modules outside of the SCI Faculty Course Directors should liaise with Schools directly to ensure there were no issues.
- LTQC should also consider if SCI wanted to offer modules that could be included in other Schools defined choice ranges.
- DE queried wording on the form which implied that all courses were required to have language options in their defined choice ranges. BM agreed to clarify this.

- BM would complete the documentation for the Natural Sciences course as the Course Director was off sick for the semester.
- BM asked the committee to discuss with their Course Directors what administrative support they would like from Hubs for completion of the forms then BM would request this. AB stated that he was receiving help from Local Support.
- There was some discussion about the necessity to map all Learning Outcomes and the amount of work required to do this. DE felt that this would take a considerable amount of time to complete and no one would look at the outputs. BM stated that doing this was part of the QA processes and that the committee would be expected to review each other's forms through the LTQC forum.
- There was a debate about what level of details was required in terms of Learning Outcomes. It was agreed that DE would draft the Learning Outcomes for MTH and BM would forward these to Adam Longcroft to get feedback.

AOB

- BM advised that Module Evaluation guidelines had changed meaning that modules did not need to be evaluated every year. AB stated that it was important to continue to complete module evaluation via paper rather than online as online evaluation had significantly lower completion rates.
- BM asked the Committee to consider methods of assessing teaching delivered by ATS staff as a code of practice was needed on this for SCI. It was agreed that this would also need to align with the Peer Review process.