

LTC11D045

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

To receive the minutes of the Faculty of Social Sciences Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting held on 7 December 2011.

Recommendation

None.

Resource Implications

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity

Not applicable.

Timing of decisions

Not applicable.

Further Information

Contact details: Mr Paul Vazquez, Learning and Teaching Co-ordinator, telephone: 01603 593270, email: p.vazquez@uea.ac.uk for enquiries about the content of the paper.

Background

Not applicable.

Discussion

Not applicable.

Minutes of the meeting of the SSF LTQC held on Wednesday 7 December 2011

Present: Mrs Helena Gillespie (Chair & Associate Dean LTQ), Paul Vazquez (Secretary), Dr Jonathan Dickens (SWP), Dr John Gordon (EDU), Dr Shawn McGuire (DEV), Mr David Mead (LAW), Professor Naresh Pandit (NBS), Dr Bibhas Saha (ECO), Mr Matthew Wright (SSF Faculty Convenor).

With: Dr Garrick Fincham and Dr Sree Ghosh of the Business Intelligence Unit (for Item A1)

Apologies: Miss Meg Evans (Academic Officer, Union of UEA Students), Mr Richard Havell (Student Representative).

1 MINUTES

**Document
11M003**

Approved: Minutes from the meeting of 2 November 2011.

2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Discussed: Item 2 - The new SSF Module Outline Form.

Agreed: That the form should to be used for new modules as well as major changes to existing modules and for modules under the New Academic Model. For minor amendments to ongoing modules, either the new SSF Module Outline Form or existing forms can be used. As per previous discussions, the Form would be reviewed following feedback on its current format.

Reported: Item A6 – University Policy on Word Lengths.

This was being revisited by TPPG for resulting changes to be implemented in either the Spring Semester 2011/12 or for the beginning of the 2012/13 academic year.

SECTION A: ITEMS FOR REPORT

A1 DR GARRICK FINCHAM OF THE BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE UNIT ON INFORMATION PROVISION FOR MODULE REVIEW AND ANNUAL PROGRAMME MONITORING AND UPDATE

**Document
11D014**

(Vide Item A1 in the Minutes for the meeting of 2 November 2011)

Reported that:

- The new process aligned more to the National Student Survey (NSS) and to coherent programmes rather than individual modules;
- the previous procedure of module monitoring had not been very successful in highlighting issues which subsequently arose in the NSS;
- students would be asked for feedback less often and more coherently;
- the BIU would be undertaking an annual survey whose format followed that of the NSS for non-final year undergraduate students;
- the new process would help to ensure a stronger audit trail to show that the University was responding to students' concerns and measure the effectiveness with which improvements were managed.

Received: A presentation from Dr Garrick Fincham and Dr Sree Ghosh of the Business Intelligence Unit (BIU):

- The previous Course Review data requirements were not sustainable for BIU and a new generic level survey had been created. The first half was essentially the NSS questions and would run at the same time as the NSS to enable tracking of cohort data from the survey to the NSS (for example, whether the December 2010 IT issues were solely reflected in that academic year or continued to affect responses in future years);
- the intention was to reduce the level of resource and bureaucracy required to undertake the standard processes, without precluding Schools from obtaining additional data of they wished to do so;
- it was expected that the survey would supersede several existing surveys (eg Estates) and it was therefore possible that, depending on its final length, the survey might be divided and carried out in two separate surveys, with the first survey relating to the NSS questions and the second to the additional 'service evaluation' questions.;
- other universities' experiences showed that such a survey was a good alert for NSS issues and would also provide some higher level contextual framework;
- BIU was also responsible for both NSS and PTES as well as the Student Experience Survey, which enabled greater overview of commonalities and consistency of action between the different data sources;
- part of the current consultation was to evaluate what colleagues would like to see surveyed in the second part of the survey in terms of School, programme or module questions;
- the survey could be undertaken at any point during the NSS timeframe of February to May, but responses to previous surveys tended to be better when they were conducted before the Easter break as students tended to concentrate on their examinations after Easter, resulting in reduced survey participation;
- evidence from elsewhere suggested that there was no impact on NSS response rates as a result of conducting this type of survey and that running the survey at the same time as the NSS created a better response rate due to the 'piggy backing' of NSS publicity;
- the survey would be fully piloted and evaluated to ensure it did not impair NSS response rates or reduce the level of feedback from students in terms of its timing or any unforeseen impacts;
- two pilots were about to take place, with a longer version of the survey and a shorter version of the survey;
- the survey would hopefully also help to pick up issues relating to the transition from 'A' levels to Higher Education for Year 1 students, meaning that the University would be able to take further targeted action to address any issues highlighted;
- the most recent NSS reflected a 7% reduction in student satisfaction for Learning Resources so it was important to gauge how critical this was to students and what their current experiences were to enable targeted investment for improvements to meet student requirements;
- the survey and process would provide the broader framework previously provided by the Planning Office for course and module review. BIU was working to introduce a small set of trigger questions for modules which were not fully reviewed in any year to ensure that there were no major issues highlighted by students on those modules. In the event of issues being highlighted, further work could be undertaken on that module. These trigger questions may form part of the survey, or more likely, might be associated with it but issued via Black Board or SITS standard letter;
- the survey would only be directed at non-finalist undergraduate students and would not, therefore, include PGCE students. It may be possible to introduce a similar 'shadow' version of the PGCE NTQ Survey in due course;

- it was hoped that the data from the survey would feed into SSLC discussions and would help to clarify some of the NSS responses to enable more understanding of the issues highlighted and determine SSLC and School actions and recommendations via a “you said; we did” format;
- work would be undertaken to establish a network for distribution for NSS data in future and this would also be used for the survey. It would include, for example Heads of Schools, senior managers, course reviewers etc. The dissemination process would also involve visiting Schools.

Action: Garrick and Sree would be invited to attend the FLTQC meeting on 7 March to provide an update on the Survey.

A2 REMINDER ON THE UNIVERSITY’S FITNESS TO STUDY PROCEDURE

(See General Regulation 5 and the Procedure at:

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/calendar/General+Regulations+for+Students>
<https://www.uea.ac.uk/ltqo/studentexperience/Fitness+for+Study>)

Reported that: The University’s Fitness to Study procedure was available within the Calendar.

A3 UEA SUMMER SCHOOL 2012

**Document
on BB site**

Reported that:

- SSF Schools would be involved in delivering modules for the Summer School in the Summer of 2012;
- validation of the modules, which were generally adaptations of existing modules, would bypass School Teaching Directors and would be considered by the Academic Director of Taught Programmes.

A4 EXTERNAL EXAMINERS’ STATUS REPORT

**Document
on BB site**

Reported that:

- there were concerns that the recent restructuring might have affected existing lines of communication and knowledge of the processes for reviewing external examiners’ reports, appointing new external examiners and annual confirmation of examination board composition;
- there had been some delay in the processing of 2010/11 external examiners’ reports, but some were now ready for consideration by the FLTQC Task Group members and more were expected to be available shortly. It was hoped that the reports might be considered in batches, commencing in the New Year;
- the current position of 2010/11 external examiners’ reports was available to view via the Blackboard site folder for the meeting. It was hoped that this would be updated, with an up to date spreadsheet available to view in advance of each meeting or, if feasible, as part of the meeting documents.

Action: The Task Group would commence reviewing 2010/11 external examiners’ reports in the New Year, with a view to reporting progress to subsequent FLTQC meetings from January 2012 onwards.

[SECRETARY’S NOTE: The initial batch of 2010/11 external examiners’ reports were distributed to members for consideration on 9 January 2012.]

A5 ADDITIONAL COSTS TO STUDENTS

Reported that: The Chair has been approached for confirmation of any additional costs to students over and above standard tuition fees, with a view to exploring whether standard guidance on such charges might be required. Obvious examples might be course readers, lab coats or field trips.

Discussed:

- Criminal Record Bureau checks were undertaken by EDU and SWP students, largely at their own cost. Students were also largely required to meet the cost of travelling to and from their placements, as only limited grants were available for this. Might the University give consideration to such items being covered by the new higher fees rate from 2012/13?

Action:

- **Members to please confirm details of items within their School for which additional charges apply to the Chair by no later than Monday 9 January 2012. At this stage, simply details of the items, rather than precise information on the charges which might apply, would suffice.**
- **Members to include details of courses for which the purchase of text books was not recommended but compulsory.**
- **Replies should be copied to the Faculty Convenor, Matthew Wright.**

A6 ATTENDANCE MONITORING

Reported

that:

The Chair had asked LTS managers to confirm how much data was being entered into the system by academic colleagues and whether trigger points had been agreed for action. It was hoped details would be forthcoming, but it was proving difficult to assess the level of data entry.

Discussed:

- there were approximately 140 students who required initial meetings for attendance concerns in ECO, which was worryingly high and potentially beyond the resources available;
- whether the removal of the option to award marks for attendance or engagement had played a part in discouraging students' attendance and engagement;
- that in order for meaningful data to be extracted by LTS colleagues, as much data as possible should be entered by School colleagues;
- whether there were particular features of a module or its marking scheme which might actively encourage or discourage attendance and engagement;
- that colleagues were finding the new process of maintaining and uploading absences to be somewhat more time consuming than previous local arrangements;
- that there was a point at which the number of students in a session resulted in attendance monitoring becoming impossible to undertake in an efficient manner. NBS had cohorts of up to 300 students in a session. EDU had developed a process which enabled registers to be taken for up to 200 PGCE students, it may be that some discussion surrounding this process might be of benefit to NBS.

Action: The issue would be discussed further at the May 2012 FLTQC meeting, taking into account the experiences of the Schools and Hub colleagues of running the system fully in the Spring Semester.

SECTION B: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

B1 STATEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

(a) Update on General Regulation 8 – residence within 50km of campus.

(Vide Item B1(iii) in the Minutes for the meeting of 2 November 2011)

Reported that: the PVC (Academic) had confirmed that no action would be required in the current year. The General Regulation would also be reviewed during the current year, with consideration given to converting it to guidance with greater explanation of the reasons behind it.

(b) Integrating Sustainability in the Curriculum.

Reported that: Estates had requested information on this.

Action: Members to inform the Chair of their School's current position in integrating sustainability in curricula by no later than Monday 9 January 2012.

B2 SCHOOL NSS RESPONSES & ACTION PLANS

(Vide Item B4 in the Minutes for the meeting of 14 September 2011)

**Documents
11D015a-f**

Received: NSS Action Plans from all Schools.

Reported on the following main areas:

DEV: Had similar concerns to LAW regarding issues outside of its own control. A 10% positive increase across several areas may be ephemeral and not sustained in future years due to a very luminous cohort. The School was also concerned that the change from the bespoke ECO/DEV Teaching Office to the Integrated Hub Office would result in the loss of the close relationship the School enjoyed with its students. Overall very positive at 96%.

ECO: This was mixed result, with increases in some areas and decreases in others. Scores for teaching and support had been positive. Feedback was an area of concern though, despite turnaround being reduced from 4 weeks to 3 weeks in most cases. Comments were also received regarding the quality of feedback provided and the School was already working on this issue.

[SECRETARY'S NOTE: A further document in response to ECO's NSS results was added to the Blackboard site after the meeting. Please see Document 11D015bi.]

EDU: The School was pleased by an increase in response rates and in scores since it first took part in the NSS last year. The School still remained slightly below SSF and UEA averages, but had seen an increase of up to 30% in some areas, so was moving very much in the right direction and was aiming to fall into line with UEA averages next year and repeat its PTES experience of exceeding UEA and SSF averages in future. Feedback and organisation and management were the main areas of concern. The School was establishing a working party in the Spring Semester to look at best practice for feedback both within the School and beyond.

LAW: The School was concerned that it had received reduced scores for administration, management and organisation, which had seen substantial decreases in recent years. A sizeable volume of the issues which had low or reducing scores were outside of the School's control, eg timetabling, and the existing trends would imply that further reductions to scores may follow in the future. Overall this meant the School did not feel it was being accurately reflected in tables as 72nd out of 90 Law Schools.

NBS: Overall scores had increased from 83% to 89%, meaning the School had equalled its highest satisfaction score in the past 6 years. Gains had been made in half the questions, largely in those relating to teaching. The School had identified responses with scores below 75% as requiring action, and these largely related to assessment issues eg feedback, clear outcomes etc. The School would run an assessment issues workshop, probably by programme,

to attempt to identify the issues and how best to respond to them.

SWP: The School had topped the national results for the BSc in Psychology teaching. The BA in Social Work had received 100% overall score, but had seen dips in organisation and management, which had been largely to do with placements. The School was well aware that placements were being sought in a very hard pressed sector and that the placements involved extra work for the placement providers. Some programmes elsewhere failed to find placements for all their students, resulting in enforced intercalation, which had never happened at UEA. There may be an issue of expectation management in terms of students' placements. The School had found that, generally, older students gave less positive scores than younger students and that this had a detrimental effect on the BA in Social Work programme as it usually consisted of a significant number of older students (eg older students may live off campus and have different issues with accessing facilities than students living on campus).

Action: The Chair would produce a summary for the Faculty Executive, which would also highlight the main issues and those areas of concern which were outside of Schools' control. If needed, a report would then be submitted to the PVC (Academic) and Academic Director of Taught Programmes to highlight institutional level issues which were outside the Schools' control.

B3 FEEDBACK FROM THE NEW ACADEMIC MODEL WORKING PARTY: DEFINED CHOICE, PROGRAMME TEMPLATE and QA PROCESSES **Section on BB site**

Reported that:

- there were still outstanding issues for taught postgraduate programmes, which would be addressed in due course;
- the Chair's proposal of a specific defined choice timetable slot had been considered by LTC, which generally supported it. It currently appeared that HUM and SCI would also adopt the proposal. Further meetings would take place within the next fortnight to discuss the issues. There were likely to still be some limitations on numbers of students for each module though, particularly in terms of the sizes of groups for modules;
- there was some concern over the resource implications of the quality assurance process for New Academic Model programmes, in particular the large volume of SSF programmes - approx 30 at ug level and approx 50 at pgt level - for which course proposals would need to be considered in terms of New Academic Model key areas (eg balance of formative and summative, progression etc). Under the NAM process, consideration was required by individual FLTQC members, the SSF NAM working party, the FLTQC, TPPG and then LTC.

Discussed:

- It was likely to be year 2 of the NAM when second year students would take their defined choice modules.

Action: The Secretary would add notes of the New Academic Model Working Party meetings to the FLTQC Black Board site and the Chair would circulate them.

[**SECRETARY'S NOTE:** A new section titled "New Academic Model" has been added to the FLTQC Blackboard site and contains the documents for the October and November NAM Working Party meetings. Further meeting documents will be added as they become available.]

B4 UPDATE ON NBS ACTIVITY AT UEA LONDON

Received:

An oral report from Professor Naresh Pandit:

- The UG Programme Director reported that:
A useful meeting with UEA London Library committee had identified some issues to be

dealt with;

UEA London was looking to recruit new external examiners for the International Business Management programme with a view to having bespoke UEA London external examiners and not overload the UEA external examiners;

the Professional Services area had adopted key UEA procedures including attendance monitoring;

there had been some issues as summative work had been submitted for the first time;

attendance had been very poor, especially for Year 2 students (including INTO students entering directly into Year 2). Discussions were needed on this in order to develop an action plan;

slow progress had been made on City University Library cards with only approx 80-100 of the 250 students have a fully functioning card at end of November 2011. The Dean of SSF was already aware of this issue.

- The Director for MSc programmes reported that a recent SSLC meeting had been chaired by the Dean of UEA London:

Business students were pleased with the academic programme and had found the academic support to be welcoming and helpful. The Professional Services team and its Team Leader had been praised for their support;

there were issues surrounding the Library and IT provision though. Complaints had been received over the difficulty of logging into City Library to renew books and lack of access to City Library online resources. Projectors on the fourth floor were frequently broken and not repaired quickly enough;

the students felt that the course had improved substantially since last year, so the School had found it very annoying to see smaller issues spoiling an overall positive experience.

Action: The Chair would discuss the issues raised with the Dean of SSF.

B5 UNION OF UEA STUDENTS' FEEDBACK ON THE ABOLITION OF WORD COUNT PENALTIES

This item was postponed to the January 2012 meeting.

B6 THE UNIVERSITY'S ASSESSMENT COMPACT

**Document
11D016**

Received: the University's Assessment Compact.

Action: Members to email the Chair with any comments please.

B7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Reported:

That, in line with LTS procedure, the Assessment Office had been asked to organise invigilation arrangements for course tests in Week 11, but had contacted the Module Organisers at short notice to inform them they were unable to do so, despite having previously confirmed that this would be possible. This had caused significant problems in making alternative arrangements at the last minute.

Action: The Chair would raise the issue with LTS colleagues.

SECTION C: ONGOING ITEMS FOR REGULAR REPORT

(Documents were available to view on request at the meeting)

C1. APPROVED COURSE CLOSURES

The following courses have had closure approved:

i. NBS

T2N1F8201UL – MBA in Strategic Carbon Management (2 Year – London)

T2N1F8301UL – MBA in Strategic Carbon Management (London)

To cease delivery from: December 2012

ii. LAW

T2M22Y101 – LLM in Internet Technology and Intellectual Property Law with Research Methods Training (part time)

Ceased to be delivered: 2008/09

T1M131101 – LLM in International Trade Law with Research Methods Training

Ceased to be delivered: 2009/10

T2M22X201 – LLM in International Commercial & Business Law with Research Methods Training (part time)

T2M131201 – LLM in International Trade Law with Research Methods Training (part time)

T1M203101 – LLM in Media Law, Policy & Practice with Research Methods Training

T2M203201 – LLM in Media Law, Policy & Practice with Research Methods Training (part time)

To cease delivery from: 2010/11

C2. CHANGES TO EXISTING PROGRAMMES

The following changes have been approved:

i. DEV

T1L720101 - MA in Development Studies (full time)

T2L720201 - MA in Development Studies (part time)

Name change to MA in International Development from the 2012/13 academic year, to bring them into line with the name of the School, with no changes to course profile.

ii. NBS

T1NN71101 - MBA

T2NN71201 – Executive MBA (part time)

T1N1F8101 - Strategic Carbon Management MBA

Redistribution of credits within the programmes to align more closely with the best MBA Schools worldwide - 'Management Consultancy Skills' module reduced from 60 credits to 40 credits, starting with the January 2012 cohort. An additional 10 credit 'Organisational Behaviour' module to be introduced and students to undertake an additional 10 credits of optional modules.

SECTION D: EXTERNAL EXAMINERS' REPORTS

A spreadsheet detailing the current position regarding 2010/11 External Examiners' Reports was available via the FLTQC Black Board site for the meeting. It was hoped that an updated version would be made available via the Black Board site for future meetings.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND FUTURE ITEMS:

Wednesday 25 January 2012, from 2.30pm to 4.30pm, in ARTS I, room 1.83
(the DEV Meeting Room)

FEEDBACK ON EXAMINATIONS – Faculty responses to request from the October 2011 meeting

EXTERNAL EXAMINERS REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION