

**SEN09D019**

Title: **Report of the meetings of the Learning and Teaching Committee held on 09 December, 2009 and 03 February, 2010**  
Author: Head of the Learning and Teaching Committee  
Date: February, 2010  
Version: Final  
Circulation: The Senate – 24 February, 2010  
Agenda: SEN09A002  
Status: Open

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The following items were considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee at its meetings on 09 December, 2009 and 03 February, 2010 and are here presented for the Senate's information.

(For all documents referred to within this report, please refer to the LTC agendas at <https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeefoffice/ueacombds/ltc/ltc0910/091209> and <https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeefoffice/ueacombds/ltc/ltc0910/030210>)

**1. Statements by the Chair**

**1.1 New Members**

The Chair was pleased to welcome two new representatives of the Graduate Students' Association: Mr. Olasoji Fagbola (President) and Ms Sunmi Kim. Also welcomed to the Committee was Dr. Shawn McGuire who had assumed the role of Faculty Associate Dean (Learning, Teaching and Quality) during the study leave of Dr. Sarah Connolly in Semester 2, 2009-10.

**1.2 Central Student Handbook**

The Committee was pleased to hear that the "Central Student Handbook" was now available to students and to staff via the 'e'-Portal (accessible to staff via the Faculty tab on the portal under 'My UEA Groups'). Members may recall that this was one of the actions arising from the QAA's audit of the University in April, 2009. The Committee's thanks were extended to those officers in School, Faculty and Central Offices who had commented on draft versions of the Handbook.

1.3 The four Associate Deans (LTQ) had made presentations and contributions to the University's Policy Half Day held on 18 November, 2009. The Director of Taught Programmes had also given a presentation on academic appeals which had helped raise the awareness of Heads of Schools to current issues.

1.4 The Chair drew the Committee's attention to the UEA Student Experience 2009 report published by the Union of UEA Students.

1.5 The Chair has been invited by Universities UK and Guild HE to join a national review group looking at the role of external examiners as part of a number of reviews being conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council for England regarding academic standards and the quality of students' experience.

- 1.6 Members have noted that the Post-graduate Certificate in Clinical Education (part of the MCLinEd offered by the Faculty of Health) has been accredited by the Higher Education Academy as leading to Fellowship of the Academy on successful completion. Successful 2009-10 candidates will achieve Fellowship.
- 1.7 The Higher Education Academy has announced that Mr. Richard Brawn will be the University's HEA contact viz Mr. Eddie Gulc with immediate effect. The Chair had written to Mr. Gulc expressing the University's thanks for his support and to Mr. Brawn inviting him to visit the University.
- 1.8 Members noted that the date for the fourth Learning and Teaching Day has been set for Friday 16 April, 2010 in the new Thomas Paine Study Centre. An external speaker, Professor Phil Race, has accepted an invitation to give a presentation on aspects of good teaching practice. It was hoped that the day would finish with an "any questions" – style plenary session. Publicity would soon be available.

## 2. **Confirmation of Chair's Action**

The Committee has confirmed Chair's action in approving a number of new prizes in the School of Medicine, Health Policy and Practice and a change to the current regulations for the "Transitions" prize to extend eligibility to post-graduate taught as well as undergraduate students.

## 3. **Higher Education: Future Directions**

The Committee has considered a suite of documents regarding the future direction of higher education including academic standards, the quality of the student experience and funding.

The Committee has considered a number of reports, including:

- i) the Department of Business Innovation and Skills: Report – Higher Ambitions: The Future of Universities in a Knowledge Economy;
- ii) the report of the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE's) sub-committee for Teaching, Quality and the Student Experience;
- iii) HEFCE's consultation on future arrangements for quality assurance in England and Northern Ireland;
- iv) the Secretary of State's letter to HEFCE on HE Funding 2010/11 and
- v) Information Note 1-2009-127 from Universities UK on iv) above.

To aide their debate, the Committee received a paper from the Head of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office setting out some of the implications with particular regard to the quality assurance and enhancement landscape. Members have reflected that whatever changes are made to the process, the student experience, including issues such as staff:student ratios (already prioritised by the University) and provision of more information (for example, on class contact times) is likely to remain key. In addition to a review of the audit process, there is a separate group looking at the role of external examiners in relation to academic standards. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic) has been invited to participate in this review.

The Learning, Teaching and Quality Office will prepare a draft response to the HEFCE consultation document. Whilst no immediate action is required as a result of the report by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills, a watching brief will be maintained.

### **(Documents:**

**LTC09D071 – HEFCE consultation on future arrangements for quality assurance in England and Northern Ireland;**

**LTC09D072 – the Secretary of State's letter to HEFCE on HE Funding 2010/11 and LTC09D073 – Information note I-2009-127 from Universities UK refer).**

The reports may be consulted at:

- <http://www.bis.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/publications/Higher-Ambitions.pdf>
- [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09\\_40/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_40/) - the HEFCE sub-committee for Teaching, Quality and the Student Experience.

#### 4. **Student Progression and Employability Strategies**

The Committee has received reports from all four Faculties in accordance with the above strategy. In addition, the Committee has received an oral report from the Director of the Careers Centre who noted that "CV Builder" was now live on Blackboard for students, having replaced the previous academic and personal development system. Feed-back indicated that students regard CV Builder as a more useful tool.

With regard to the institutional data on employability which was available on the Careers Centre web pages, members appreciated that the figures needed to be viewed in the context of the current economic climate. It was encouraging that an analysis of the data suggested that there had been a minimal adverse effect upon UEA graduates although there could be a delayed impact which might be seen in next year's figures. Nevertheless, members welcomed the fact that the improved employability data had had a significant impact on the University's rankings in league tables which demonstrated the importance of this data. There are a number of factors underpinning the improvement including structural changes such as new vocational courses from which the first cohorts of students had graduated and the impact of regional employment of graduates.

Attention has been drawn to proposals to include graduate salaries within the key performance indicators. This information is currently not routinely collected and it is felt that requesting it might have an impact on response rates, that the information collected might not be reliable and that the regional factor might have a skewing effect.

Members have also noted that there is no requirement to collect first destination information from international students and recognise that this is problematic for Schools with a high proportion of such students. There were also challenges in gathering next destination information from research students with a suggestion that there may be potential to collate information centrally from supervisors as well as from students.

Members were informed that the Careers Centre had opened a new 'Job Shop' in the square in September, 2008 and that there had been a significant rise in student employment on campus. The data indicated that there had also been an increase in student engagement with the Careers Centre across the full range of resources available. A new post of International Student Careers Advisor had been created, being a joint appointment between the Careers Centre and the Dean of Students' Office.

In their consideration of individual Faculty reports, members have welcomed as an example of good practice, the two-day careers event held in the School of Biological Sciences. A School in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities held a careers event which coincided with an open day, thus helping to connect the student journey from admission to employment. The Committee has also welcomed a Faculty Employability Guide prepared by the Careers Centre to assist Faculties' efforts.

In future, the Committee has agreed that Faculty Executives should be involved in the monitoring of employability reports as this will be a good forum for detailed discussion. The Learning and Teaching Committee will continue to receive a report, albeit in more summary form, thus still allowing a sharing and dissemination of experiences and good practice.

The Committee has thanked all Faculties, Schools and the Careers Centre for the detailed work that has gone into the preparation of the various reports. Relevant documents may be consulted as follows:

- First destination statistics:  
[http://www.uea.ac.uk/careers/services/staff/ueanetwk/Employability%20and%20p  
roggression%20-%20Appendix%20v4%202009.pdf](http://www.uea.ac.uk/careers/services/staff/ueanetwk/Employability%20and%20p<br/>roggression%20-%20Appendix%20v4%202009.pdf)
- Faculty Employability Guide: <http://www.uea.ac.uk/employability>
- Faculty of Arts and Humanities: Documents LTC09D040 and LTC09D078 refer
- Faculty of Health: Document LTC09D041 refers
- Faculty of Science: Document LTC09D076 refers
- Faculty of Social Sciences: Document LTC09D077 refers.

## 5. **Academic Standards – Plagiarism and Collusion**

In accordance with procedure, the Committee has received reports from School Plagiarism and Collusion Officers in respect of 2008-09. Also available to the Committee were the summary outcomes from 2006-07 and 2007-08. The Committee has noted that the number of cases has increased year on year and that the figures are likely to be an underestimate of the total number of cases. (Faculties had identified under-reporting as a direct consequence of the existing policy). Members have noted that the new policy on plagiarism and collusion, which was introduced from September, 2009, might produce even higher figures as the new policy is less confrontational and more supportive in cases of poor academic practice. A new web-based reporting tool which will improve and standardise the reporting and monitoring of cases is nearing completion.

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

**(Document LTC09D075 refers).**

## 6. **LTC Projects**

The Committee has considered progress reports on assessment and on transitions into/within HE. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair has thanked the Project Officers, Ms. Eva Roberts and Ms. Anne Vallins for their continued investigations into these important issues. The Committee will emphasise to the SIS Project Board and Project Team, the importance of identifying ways to track international students on the basis of IELTS component scores (not just the overall score) and students progressing to the University from INTO UEA with reference to their UEA course.

**(Documents:  
LTC09D042 – report on Assessment and  
LTC09D082 – Transitions into/within HE refer)**

## 7. **LTC Reviews**

Updates on the reviews of Disciplinary Procedures and of Professional Misconduct and/or Unsuitability Procedures have been considered. Members have endorsed the proposal that the two review groups have reached a point where it would be most useful for all members to meet as a combined group.

The Committee has also supported the principles which will underpin revised policy and procedures in respect of student discipline, including adoption of the notion of assigning a level to the severity of offence. In so doing, the approach is similar to the approach now in place in respect of plagiarism and collusion and will assist the Senate Discipline Committee in applying a range of appropriate penalties.

**(Documents:  
LTC09D080 – Disciplinary Procedures and**

**LTC09D081 – Professional Misconduct and/or Unsuitability Procedures refer).**

**8. Postgraduate Research Programmes Policy Group**

The Committee has received a progress report of items under consideration by the Group including the position on “Roberts Funding” allocations to Faculties/CSED for 2009-10 and the position should so called ‘Roberts’ monies cease in March, 2011. Members have agreed the principle that there should be a commitment to continued provision of training and a way of ensuring its funding should be found. Members have also received a summary of issues arising from external examiners’ reports for research degrees, 2008-09. (This report will be brought to the attention of Senate when a consolidated report covering undergraduate and postgraduate taught and postgraduate research provision is presented to it for endorsement).

The Committee has approved a number of amendments to governance of postgraduate research programmes including:

- i) revisions to regulations, to the Code of Practice for Research Degrees and its associated policy documents with regard to the preparation and submission of ‘e’-theses and to the rules for the form and submission of work in order to permit electronic submission. The revisions will take effect from 01 April, 2010;
- ii) 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, with immediate effect;

**(Documents:**

**LTC09D058 – Roberts Funding Allocation to Faculties/CSED for 2009-10;**

**LTC09D059 – Summary of Issues Arising from External Examiners’ Reports for Research Degrees 2008-09;**

**LTC09D060 – Report from the meeting of the Policy Group on 06 November, 2009;**

**LTC09D061 – Considering the Deposition of Theses in either an electronic or hard-copy format and**

**LTC09D074 – Report of the Policy Group meeting on 22 January, 2010 refer).**

**9. The Taught Programmes Policy Group**

The Committee has received an oral report of the meeting of the Policy Group on 25 November, 2009 and a report of the meeting held on 13 January, 2010.

Attention is drawn to the following:

- i) The Committee has approved an amendment to take immediate effect, to the academic appeals procedure which will more clearly set out an option available to a Head of School to approve or submit a concession as relevant, as a result of an academic appeal where the circumstances indicate that this is an appropriate remedy, rather than referring all matters to a Board of Examiners. The Committee will also recommend to the Executive Team that all Heads of Schools be required to undertake mandatory academic appeals and academic complaints training;
- ii) The Committee has also approved the implementation of a sticker system for written assignments aimed at ensuring that students with specific learning difficulties receive better-focused feedback comments. The Director of Taught Programmes will co-ordinate implementation of this new approach, which further develops existing policy on the use of stickers in examinations and course tests;

- iii) A guidance note on the conduct of viva-voce examinations has been approved to take immediate effect, noting that such examinations are in use in some Schools within the Faculty of Science to help classify students with aggregate scores on borderlines;
- iv) A new procedure covering course closure has been endorsed in principle by the Committee with authority vested in the Chair to approve any minor amendments to the document. In so doing, members have noted that this process draws on one originally developed in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. The University's Code of Practice governing the review of programmes refers to such a process as does the one for new course proposals. As evaluations of course viability based only a business case might impact on particular groups of students, the new process also includes provision for an impact assessment with regard to equality and diversity. Although some members expressed concern about workload in respect of courses with small numbers, it was not anticipated that initial scrutiny to determine whether a full impact assessment was necessary, would be overly onerous.

The Committee has also noted:

- a) ongoing work by the Policy Group with regard to new guidelines on group work, on scaling of marks, a draft policy on the use of proof readers and a draft procedure for teaching and assessing near relatives of members of academic and administrative staff;
- b) the participation by the University once again in the Post-graduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) which will be co-ordinated by the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office;
- c) the progress of the Policy Group in developing a policy on feedback on student work. In this regard, members were informed that a presentation by Dr. Harriet Jones of the School of Biological Sciences on her report on feedback (funded and recently published by the Higher Education Academy) had been extremely valuable. A sub-group of the Policy Group will be developing a set of basic principles for consideration at the Group's next meeting in June, 2010. Faculty Associate Deans have also been asked to discuss the issues with their respective Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees to identify examples of good practice, to consider students' perception to feedback and possible mechanisms for discussing their expectations, to collect examples of feedback pro-formas and to formulate action plans;
- d) the ongoing discussions concerning the possible adoption of Grade Point Averages within the revised Common Course Structure Regulations. The Committee has agreed that further consideration should be given to the above as a way of addressing concerns about rewarding students who do well and about improving the engagement of other students who currently aim to achieve a pass. The Committee has noted that the GPA, as a simple metric, has the potential to create another benchmark for students as every item of assessment would count in equal measure. Two Faculties have been consulted and have given their endorsement to further exploration. There is, however, no current requirement to have such a measure nor is there a national standard for the use of GPA, although arguments for its adoption include its being a transferable and well understood international currency in academic terms. GPA will **not** replace the current degree classification system at UEA but could be used as a tool for additional information which could have benefits for employability and also be used internally for prizes and scholarships. Alternative approaches, such as making yearly averages visible via the

student transcript are other possibilities. Discussions are ongoing on this matter;

- v) with regard to the Review of Examinations and Course Tests, the Review Group has not formally met this academic session, but background work has continued, particularly in respect of a major piece of modelling of examination data which needs to be completed prior to discussion by the Review Group. Further work for the Review Group will cover course tests, consideration of future arrangements for their management and encouragement to reconsider assessment strategies to reduce volume;
- vi) an approved list of translations dictionaries for use in examinations is now in place and work is continuing on an approved list of calculators;
- vii) the Director of Taught Programmes has advised 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 are now under development for implementation from 2012-13, the Committee has agreed that it is sensible to defer the amendments to the reporting of marks until then, thus avoiding two substantial re-writes within SIS. The Director of Taught Programmes will write to Boards of Examiners and their Chairs, who will be asked to brief external examiners.

**(Documents:**

**LTC09D047 – Review of the Common Course Structure;**

**LTC09D056 – Amendment to the Academic Appeals Procedure; LTC09D055 – Course Closure Procedure;**

**LTC09D057 – Progress Report on the Development of Guidelines on the Scaling of Marks and**

**LTC09D086 – on a range of issues including Guidance for Viva Voce Examinations refer).**

**10. Partnerships**

The Committee has continued to receive reports on developments in respect of UEA London. The Committee congratulated all those concerned on the opening of UEA London on 18 January, 2010. A total of 93 students had been admitted to INTO UEA London and INTO City London programmes. The number was below the target of 200 students but difficulties with the new visa application process overseen by the UK Borders Agency had had an impact. The UEA London team was continuing to work hard on recruitment.

The Committee has noted that the UEA London staffing profile is continuing to build up: a particular pleasure is the appointment of a librarian who was the first non-academic member of staff in the UK to achieve a National Teaching Fellowship award. With regard to UEA provision, plans are well advanced to commence the MSc in Strategic Carbon Management from March, 2010. The possibility of running undergraduate programme from September, 2011 is now under consideration, the first such being offered by the Norwich Business School. The programme would be distinct from those currently offered by the School on the Norwich campus although there would be some similarities.

In view of the occupation by City University of UEA London for City's own INTO courses, the Committee has endorsed the adoption of proposed provisional arrangements for a joint quality framework with City University, which takes account of some joint teaching of both institutions' students and the desire not to have two different frameworks in operation by INTO UEA/City staff.

The Committee has also approved changes to the planned institutional and course approval process to cover the likely development of undergraduate provision at UEA London and to allow reversion to 2011 of the re-validation of INTO UEA Norwich courses.

The Committee has also considered a report of other Partnership activity including an Easton College Institutional Review, a report from the meeting of the University Campus Suffolk Joint Academic Committee held on 26 November, 2009, a list of current partnership agreements, changes to the City College Norwich Norfolk regulatory framework and approval of the City College Norwich mitigating circumstances and special allowances policy.

**(Documents:**

**LTC09D068**

**LTC09D069 and LTC09D070 – UEA London/INTO UEA London; LTC09D063**

**LTC09D089 and LTC09D090 regarding other Partnership activities refer).**

#### 11. **New Awards and New Course Proposals**

The Committee has approved the following new award titles:

- Master in Teaching and Learning (School of Education and Lifelong Learning)
- Master of Surgery (MS) (School of Medicine, Health Policy and Practice)

A request from the School of Computing Sciences for approval to reinstate the award of Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) has also been approved.

Approval in principle has been given to a new course proposal from the School of Medicine, Health Policy and Practice for a Master of Surgery in Oncoplastic Breast Surgery, including approval of the new award title of Master of Surgery (see above) and delivery through distance learning.

Members have also received a report on the trial of the revised course approvals procedure in the Faculty of Social Sciences. The Committee's thanks have been extended to the Faculty for participating. At the same time, the Committee has noted that the use of Process Manager to aid the revised course approvals process is approaching completion of build, after which it will be piloted prior to University-wide implementation from September, 2010. This was later than had originally been intended arising in part from the complexity of the build and from the need to prioritise arrangements for institutional audit by the Quality Assurance Agency in 2009.

**(Documents:**

**LTC09D044 plus Chair's Action to change the award title from Master of Teaching and Learning to Master *in* Teaching and Learning (MTL) at the request of the relevant Professional Statutory and/or Regulatory Body;**

**LTC09D045 – Master of Surgery and Oncoplastic Breast Surgery and LTC09D046 – Trial of Revised Course Approvals Procedure in SSF refer).**

#### 12. **Faculty Associate Deans (Learning, Teaching and Quality)**

The Committee has received minutes of meetings of Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Health, Science and Social Sciences. Also considered by the Committee were reports on programme reviews undertaken in 2008-09 by the Faculty of Health and of Social Sciences plus a report from the Faculty of Health on module monitoring and course update for 2007-08.

**(Documents:**

**LTC09D049 (HUM);**

**LTC09D048 and LTC09D083 (FOH);**

**LTC09D050 and LTC09D084 (SCI);**

**LTC09D051 and LTC09D085 (SSF);**

**LTC09D053 – Reports on Programme Reviews (FOH and SSF); LTC09D054 – Module Monitoring and Course Update (FOH) refer).**

**13. Enhancing the Student Experience – UEA Teaching Fellowships**

The Committee has congratulated all recipients of UEA Teaching Fellowships for 2009-10.

**(Document LTC09D088 refers)**

**14. Other Items for Report**

Members have received reports on:

- Concessions and Approvals (**Documents LTC09D064, LTC09D091 and LTC09D092 being an overview of concessions approved between 2003-04 to 2008-09**)
- Appointment of External Examiners (**Document LTC09D065 refers**)
- New Course Approvals (**Document LTC09D066 refers**)
- Module and Course Monitoring Update and Review (**Document LTC09D067 refers**)
- The Quality Assurance Agency including:
  - i) 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>)
  - ii) 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](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/institutionalAudit/IA_student_miniguide.pdf))
  - iii) Institutional Audit: a guide for student representatives (this may be consulted at: [http://www.uea.ac.uk/reviews/institutionalAudit/IA\\_studentRepGuide.pdf](http://www.uea.ac.uk/reviews/institutionalAudit/IA_studentRepGuide.pdf))
  - iv) 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.uea.ac.uk/students/studentEngagement/Rethinking.pdf>)
  - v) Rethinking the Value of Higher Education: the student as collaborator and producer? Undergraduate Research as a Case Study by Dr. Paul Taylor and Danny Wilding, The Reinvention Centre for undergraduate research, University of Warwick (this may be consulted at: <http://www.uea.ac.uk/students/studentEngagement/undergraduate.pdf>)
  - vi) Final Revised Statement for Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Food and Consumer Sciences and draft revised statement for architecture (this may be consulted at: <http://www.uea.ac.uk/news/circularLetters/CL1509.asp>)
  - vii) The Listed Bodies Order (to which this University had to reply by the end of January, 2010. (It may be consulted at: <http://www.uea.ac.uk/news/circularLetters/CL1709.asp>)
- Bologna: the University has 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 will be launched to coincide with the Bologna ministerial conference in Vienna and Budapest on 11-12 March, 2010. The University has 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 Ecology participates.

**(Document LTC09D0593 refers)**