

SEN09D032

Title: Learning and Teaching Committee : Round up
Author: Head of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office
Date: June 2010
Circulation: Senate – 16 June 2010
Agenda: SEN09A003
Status: Open

Report of the meetings of the Learning and Teaching Committee held on 18 March, 22 April and 26 May, 2010

The following items were considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee at its meetings on 18 March, 21 April and 26 May, 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/committeeoffice/ueacombds/ltc/ltc0910/> and <https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeeoffice/ueacombds/ltc/ltc0910/>)

1. Statements by the Chair

The Committee has been informed of :

- (i) the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (2010);
- (ii) the Learning and Teaching Day, held on 16 April, 2010 (see also Document LTC09D096 being the programme for the day);
- (iii) a gift by the Vice-Chancellor of £10,000 for supporting UEA Teaching Fellowships next session;
- (iv) outcomes of the elections for Student Officers of the Union of UEA Students, including the appointment of a new Academic Officer, Ms Rachel Handforth, vice Mr David Sheppard, and the election of a new President of the Graduate Students' Association, Ms Lydia Sosa-Vargas;
- (v) a report of the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills on postgraduate education;
- (vi) the formation of a working group, chaired by UUK and the NUS, to help improve information available to students, with particular reference to student charters and agreements;
- (vii) the appointment of Professor Richard Gray as Director of Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes, vice Professor Chris Vincent;
- (viii) the appointment of Dr Ben Milner as Associate Dean (LTQ), Faculty of Science, vice Dr Nick Watmough, from 2010-11 and the reappointment of Mr Ian Farr as Associate Dean (LTQ), Faculty of Arts and Humanities;
- (viii) progress of the 2010 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) which at 21 May, 2010, stood at a total of 487 responses (a response rate of 18.3% compared with a current

response rate of 12% across the '94 Group and 13.6% nationally and last year's rate (for UEA) of 12.8%);

(ix) the use, by the Faculty of Science, of the new course closure procedure, including screening for impact assessment

Document LTC09D154 refers;

(x) the latest position with regard to the development of the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) as notified by Universities UK

Document LTC09D155 refers;

(xi) the invitation, by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, for applications from institutions to shift the balance of their provision towards strategically important and vulnerable subjects in 2010/11.

(The document may be consulted at:
<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/circlets/2010/cl106.10/> .

2. Confirmation of Chair's action

The Committee has confirmed Chair's action in relation to:

(i) changes to regulations for Prizes and Scholarships: The Joe Greenwell Scholarship (AMS) and the Mark V Williams Postgraduate Scholarship;

(ii) Guidelines on proof-reading

Document LTC09D106 refers;

(iii) the establishment of the Partnerships Strategy Group (to parallel the Taught Programmes and Research Degree Programmes Policy Groups)

Document LTC09D115 refers;

(iv) the granting of approval to publicise the new degree: BSc (Hons) International Business Management, to be offered at UEA London

Document LTC09D122 refers;

(v) the University's response to the QAA consultation on the evaluation of the academic infrastructure

Document LTC09D134 and the earlier draft LTC09D124 refer.

3. UEA LONDON

In addition to Chair's action regarding publicity for the new degree: BSc (Hons) International Business Management at UEA London, the Committee has also given approval in principle to change the base of the existing MA in Creative Entrepreneurship from UEA Norwich to UEA London from September, 2010. (The Senate will consider at its meeting on 16 June, 2010, recommendations from the Committee concerning institutional approval of UEA London (including INTO UEA London).

Document LTC09D123 refers to the new degree proposal.

4. ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

The Committee has considered an oral report and presentations by the **Dean of Students** on i) International Students and ii) on the Advising System. The presentations are available for consultation at:

<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeeoffice/ueacombds/ltc/ltc0910/210410/pp1> and
<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeeoffice/ueacombds/ltc/ltc0910/210410/pp2>

It has also considered a report from the **Careers Service** on UEA provision in the light of the revised Section 8 of the QAA's Code of Practice on Career Education, information, advice and guidance and an oral report on the use of CV Builder as a means of delivering personal development planning for students. CV Builder replaces the previous Academic and Personal Development package and has a more immediate relevance to students with regard to employability.

A report on the operation of **Student Representation and Staff:Student Liaison** in accordance with the University's Code of Practice on the same, has been considered as have reports of the meetings of the **Student Experience Committee**.

Documents LTC09D110 and LTC09D151 (Student Experience Committee), LTC09D140 (Careers) and LTC09D129 and LTC09D149 (Student Representation and Staff-Student Liaison) refer.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ASSESSMENT

The Committee has received information concerning the new single Equality Bill which passed through Parliament on 6 April and which has now received Royal Assent. The University's Equality and Diversity Manager will prepare guidance on the implications of the Act for the University. The Act streamlines and strengthens legislation and simplifies the approach to equality by forming a mainly common framework for eight 'protected characteristics'. These include: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

With regard to religion of belief, the Committee has noted that in the current 2009 – 10 session, the reassessment period coincides with Ramadan. The Committee has supported proposals that standard letters informing students about reassessment or delayed first sits in August should ask students who consider that they might be affected by religious observance to notify the relevant Faculty Office in advance of the assessment period. It might then be possible to adjust the examinations timetable (including timetabling of examinations in the morning only, if possible). Members are mindful of other possible reasonable adjustments including the use of existing discretionary powers under the regulations open to Boards of Examiners in the light of extenuating circumstances; the possibility of good cause applications and the granting of extensions in respect of Masters dissertations where merited by individual extenuating circumstances. Members are also aware that courses regulated by a Professional, Statutory and/or Regulatory Body (PSRB) might have less flexibility and that a dialogue might be necessary.

Document LTC09D116 refers.

6. SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY: FITNESS TO PRACTISE

The School of Nursing and Midwifery implemented new Fitness to Practise from April, 2009. The Committee asked the School to report on the first year of its operation and has approved the revised procedures, noting that the amendments are minor and the procedure appears to be working well.

Document LTC09D097 refers.

7. RESIDENCE WITH 50KM RULE

The Committee has discussed the current regulation (contained in the Student Accommodation Regulations of the Calendar (page 254 of the 2009-10 Calendar refers)) regarding the requirement of full-time students not living in University residences to reside within a 50km radius of the University. Members have debated whether the rule still has currency having regard to a range of factors, including part-time students.

After some debate, the Committee has confirmed that there should be no change to this regulation but has agreed that some changes to the current wording in the Calendar are necessary to reflect the establishment of UEA London. Members have also recommended that the requirement should be better articulated to joining students in publications such as the prospectus and at the point of offer as well as in joining instructions. They have also agreed that the regulations should be incorporated within the General Regulations for Students. Any exceptions to the requirement will continue to be considered by concession.

8. LTC GOVERNANCE

A report on the current governance of the Learning and Teaching Committee has been discussed. The report is by way of a 'stock-take' and recommends that there should be no changes in the current approach to governance except that, in view of the appointment of the Director of Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes on a one day per week basis, it has been suggested that Associate Deans (LTQ and PgR) be empowered to chair Stage 2 Academic Appeals Panels where the Director is not able to do so. Training would be provided.

The Committee has accepted the recommendations albeit with some caution regarding the last proposal in view of concerns about workload. However, the Committee has noted that the volume of Stage 2 academic appeals by postgraduate research students is less than that in respect of students on taught courses and that Associate Deans would be used where the Director was not able to participate.

Document LTC09D137 refers.

9. LTC REVIEWS

The Committee has been kept abreast of progress with regard to the reviews of i) Common Course Structure Degree Regulations and ii) Disciplinary Procedures and Professional Misconduct and/or Unsuitability. Proposals will be incorporated into revised CCS regulations which will be submitted to Senate during next session (2010 – 11) and revised Disciplinary Procedures (to be considered by Senate on 16 June, 2010). A review of Module Monitoring and Course Update and Review during 2010 – 11 has been supported by the Committee which has approved the proposed membership and terms of reference.

Documents LTC09D117; LTC09D118; LTC09D138 and LTC09D150 refer.

10. LTC PROJECTS

There are two projects sponsored by the Committee using Teaching Enhancement and Student Success funds (formerly Teaching Quality Enhancement funds): review of assessment and 'transitions' into/within higher education.

The Committee has considered a report on degree classifications 2008-09 which includes comparison with the three previous sessions, national UK figures and, where available, 1994 Group outcomes. It has been circulated to Schools for information. The building up of the data set is useful management information.

A joint report by the two Project Officers on 'Understanding student withdrawal' has been discussed. Quantitative and qualitative data were presented with a strong recommendation that more work should be done in this area to ascertain in more detail and more

systematically the reasons for student withdrawal. One suggestion is that a standard letter be issued on notification of a student withdrawal to seek more information. A further proposal is that a small group be established by the Dean of Students and others to take this work forward.

Documents LTC09D130 and LTC09D139 refer.

11. NEW COURSE PROPOSALS

The following new course proposals have received approval in principle by the Committee:

City College Norwich:

BA (Hons) Applied Sport, Health and Exercise (a 'top-up' route from a Foundation Degree)
FdA Media Practice (noting that this proposal emerges from the division into two separate courses of a previously-approved Foundation Degree. The Faculty of Arts and Humanities has been consulted and had no comments)
FdA Journalism (the second of the two courses referred to above. The Committee has requested clarification of the 'top-up' route to honours, noting that the generic BA (Hons) Professional Studies was available in the School of Education and Lifelong Learning)

UEA

School of Biological Sciences: MSc Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security MSc Molecular Medicine

The Committee has also considered proposals relating to UEA London (see section 3 above). It has also discussed a proposal for a Foundation Degree in Social Pedagogy and Integrated Children's Services to be offered by the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, following negotiations with Norfolk Children's Services (Norfolk County Council). Members were minded to give approval in principle subject to clarification of two concerns regarding support by the Dean of Students' Office and proposed reporting of student attendance (or lack of it) to the students' sponsors. They have given authority to the Chair to give approval on receipt of satisfactory clarification.

In accordance with the University's Code of Practice on Assuring and Enhancing Teaching Quality and LTC governance, members have considered a report on an audit of new courses approved by Associate Deans (LTQ) and Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee. Members have noted areas of good practice (for example, fully-costed business plans in the Faculty of Health, a spreadsheet within the Faculty of Arts and Humanities listing all new courses in development, a schedule used in the Faculty of Science, setting deadlines for consideration of proposals, and files that clearly document external consultation). There are also some areas for improvement, including clearer evidence of full consideration of the resource implications of new courses and of liaison with all internal stakeholders. The audit concludes that over all, there is evidence of robust academic approval of new courses.

Documents LTC09D094, LTC09D099, LTC09D100, LTC09D126 and LTC09D145 refer.

13. PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to UEA London, the establishment of a Partnerships Strategy Group and new course proposals (referred to in sections 2, 3 and 12 above) the Committee has considered and approved a revised procedure for academic appeals at City College Norwich and recommendations arising from the meeting of the University Campus Suffolk Joint Academic Committee (held on 11 March, 2010). The recommendations endorsed cover a number of course-related matters:

- the addition of two named pathways within the existing FdA Health Care Practice (Management of Acute Conditions and Management of Long Term conditions)
- re-approval of the CertHE/FdA Graphic Design for delivery at UCS Bury St Edmunds for five year commencing from September, 2010

- a change in course title to FdA Supporting Inclusive Learning and Practice (from supporting Inclusive learning) at UCS Lowestoft
- discontinuation of the FdSc Sport, Health and Exercise at the end of the 2010-11 academic year when all existing students will have completed the course.

Other reports summarising the work of the Partnerships Office have also been received.

Documents LTC09D108, LTC09D111, LTC09D127 and LTC09D131 refer.

14. CENTRE FOR STAFF AND EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT (CSED)

The Committee has welcomed a report from CSED on its activities relating to learning and teaching matters.

Document LTC09D128 refers with additional appendices being available for consultation at: <https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeeoffice/ueacombds/lc/lc0910/210410/dividernltc09d128>

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

Oral reports from Faculty Associate Deans (LTQ) and minutes of meetings of the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committees have been welcomed by the Committee.

Documents LTC09D101, LTC09D102, LTC09D103, LTC09D104, LTC09D119, LTC09D120, LTC09D121 and LTC09D156 refer.

16. POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAMMES POLICY GROUP

A number of developments have been recommended by the Policy Group and endorsed by the Committee. These include:

- minor changes to the Rules for Consultation and Borrowing of Theses to reflect the change of policy to permit candidates to submit two hard-bound copies or one hard-bound copy and one electronic copy of theses and a reduction in the number of copies of the abstract from five to three;
- change to the examiners' report form for the MSc by Research (removal of question 5) in order better to reflect the regulations for this degree;
- changes to the Code of Practice: Research Degrees to formalise expectations for pgr training, in particular: insertion of an additional key principle to the list of Key Principles for Research Degree Supervision (p4) regarding the undertaking by students of skills and employability training; the amendment of Section 7: Supervision vii) Guidance and Feedback (p17) to include a new responsibility for primary supervisors and supervisory teams to discuss the skills and employability courses that the student should attend; the insertion of an additional section after Section 7 Supervision (p17), paragraph 8 Skills and Employability Training;
- revisions to the regulations for the Doctor of Education.

In addition to the above, the Committee has been updated about skills training and 'Roberts' funding 2010-11 (which is due to be withdrawn after the final tranche of funds are received for the period 1 October, 2010 – 31 March, 2011). Meetings have been held with Faculty Associate Deans (PgR), Chairs of the Institute Graduate Studies Committees and PgR Managers. The Policy Group has also identified a number of principles that will underpin the provision of training and has invited Associate Deans to map training courses available across the University with a view to identifying any gaps and to determine the training required from CSED.

The Committee has noted that the Group has supported proposals for the development of guidelines for including publications as part of a thesis but has not supported the development of an alternative thesis format.

Document LTC09D143 refers.

Professor Chris Vincent, Director of Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes

Professor Chris Vincent has announced his retirement from the University with effect from 1 July, 2010. This brings to an end Professor Vincent's Directorship of Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes, which commenced 1 August, 2007. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Professor Vincent for the contribution he has made to postgraduate research student matters and wished him very well for the future.

17. TAUGHT PROGRAMMES POLICY GROUP

Members have approved a number of new policy documents and a revision to Instructions to Examiners (Common Course Structure Degree Regulations and Integrated Master's Regulations) regarding the scaling of marks, as follows:

- new guidelines on proof-reading (also endorsed by the Postgraduate Research Programmes Policy Group);
- revisions to the Instructions to Examiners 5.1, 5.2 and 6.2 respectively of the Common Course Structure, Integrated Master's and Common Master's Framework);
- new guidance on the assessment of Group Work;
- a new standardised concessionary route for Year 1 students only to permit a delayed assessment attempt by a mode other than examination in the autumn rather than requiring an intercalation until the next examination series. This will be restricted to students who have one outstanding assessment which has been narrowly failed at first sit and which can be set as an alternative non-examined assessment and where circumstances affecting August (re)assessment have been resolved in time to enable unaffected September study. Members of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office will undertake further consideration of the implications of such concessions and of registration and will issue advice to Schools;
- revised list of approved calculators;
- amended Note regarding the Co-teaching of Undergraduates and Taught Postgraduates which now becomes **policy** rather than guidance;
- new, separate regulations for the submission of work for Higher Degrees (Taught Master's Degrees).

Other items discussed and under consideration by the Policy Group include: student surveys (NSS, PTES, PRES) and how to encourage students to respond, including consideration of adoption of an approach to publishing a list of 'You said... we did....' actions; a review of the operation of penalties for exceeding word limits and penalties for unauthorised late submission of work for assessment; a review of reports on plagiarism and collusion; a presentation from the Academic Office of the Union of UEA Students summarising students' responses on a range of issues, including examination feedback, with the Policy Group reiterating the view of the Examinations and Course Test Review Group that resources might be better targeted towards effective feed-forward which was advocated by 42% of the students who responded to the survey; review of coursework marking by registration number leading to a proposed 'no change' (with some reservations) to the current policy; and feedback to the Director of Taught Programmes on a draft revised General Regulation 6 (Attendance and Progress) of the General Regulations for Students and associated disciplinary procedures, endorsing the general approach being taken.

Documents LTC09D105, LTC09D106, LTC09D107, LTC09D125 and LTC09D144 refer.

18. QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY

The Committee has received a report on progress against the action plan arising from the University's Institutional Audit, 2009. Following up one of the 'desirable' recommendations of the auditors, the Committee has considered a report on nomenclature of committees. It has also considered a report on the operation of the system of extensions for coursework deadlines and has referred this to the Taught Programmes Policy Group for further consideration (see section 17 above).

Other items concerning the QAA received by the Committee include:

- a note of the Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies' Forum on supporting sustainability (this may be consulted at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/employers/PSRBMar2010.asp>)
- a podcast/note about the QAA's leadership of a working group made up of colleagues across the higher education sector in the UK and Europe to explore the nature of 'doctorateness' and to consider if further guidance would be useful to support the existing advice about academic quality and standards for doctoral education (this may be consulted at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/standardsandquality/doctoralqualification/default.asp>)
- revisions to Sections 3 (Disable students) and 8 (Career education, information, advice and guidance) of the Code of Practice
- three discussion papers regarding the QAA's evaluation of the Academic Infrastructure (this may be consulted at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/evaluation10/>)

Documents LTC09D146 (action plan), LTC09D148 (nomenclature of committees), LTC09D142 (system of extensions for coursework deadlines) refer.

19. Other Items for Report

Members have received reports on:

- Concessions and Approvals (*Documents LTC09D112 and LTC09D132*)
- New Course Approvals and Notification of Course Closure (*Documents LTC09D113, LTC09D133 and TLC09D154 refer*)
- Programme Monitoring and Review (*Document LTC09D153 refers*)
- Higher Education Funding Council for England: consultation on key principles and features of a review of the teaching funding method (consultation closes 12 July, 2010) (this document may be consulted at: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2010/10_10/)
- Department for Business, Innovation and Skills: one step Beyond: Making the most of postgraduate education (this document may be consulted at: <http://www.bis.gov.uk/one-step-beyond>)
- Universities UK: update on the Development of the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) (*Document LTC09D155 refers*).