

SEN10D033

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The following items were considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee at its meeting on 17 March 2011, and are presented for the Senate's information.

1. STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

It was reported that:

- 1.1 the outcome of the THE: Student Experience Survey in which UEA had achieved third place, ahead of both Oxford and Cambridge – which was most encouraging.
- 1.2 the appointment of Dr Adam Longcroft as Director of Taught Programmes from 1 August 2011 for 3 years to July, 2014 vice Professor Geoff Moore. (On behalf of members, the Chair congratulated Dr Longcroft on his appointment and wished him well in his new role).
- 1.3 that the QAA was seeking nominations for student reviewers for Institutional review in England and Northern Ireland and that the attention of the Union of UEA Students had been drawn to this.
- 1.4 the letter from OFFA in relation to fees setting had been received.
- 1.5 the Committee had received a document from FOH detailing guidance to students on the use of social networking which was presented for information.
- 1.6 the Committee had received papers on four external consultations:
 - 1.6.1 the consultation by the Office of Independent Adjudicator with regard to the Pathway Consultation – 2nd round.
 - 1.6.2 the consultation by the Quality Assurance Agency on proposed changes to the Academic Infrastructure (for the proposed changes, see <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/news/consultation/ai>)
 - 1.6.3 the joint consultation by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, Universities UK and GuildHE on proposals for the provision of public information about higher education
 - 1.6.4 1994 Group response to the HEFCE/UUK/GuildHE joint consultation on changes to information published by institutions.

1.7 that the first LTC Education Strategies Day would be held on 5 May 2011. Members were reminded of on-line area for discussion ahead of the strategy day which would help shape the agenda.

1.8 that the HEFCE funding letter had been sent to the University on 16 March. There was a summary of the HEFCE budget on HEFCE's website. UEA income for 2011/12 was down 4.3%, ahead of more severe cuts from 2012/13.

2. CONFIRMATION OF CHAIR'S ACTION

Chair's action in approving the following new prize regulations and amendments to existing prizes:

AMS: Amendment to the Will Jordan Memorial Scholarship
PHI: Prize for distinguished performance by an MA student

3. ELLUMINATE

The Committee considered a report on pilots using live classroom software.

CSED's learning technologists (Jo Bruce and Andy Mee) were facilitating the pilots and would be very keen and willing to visit Schools to discuss use of the technology. Of particular interest was the potential for carbon reduction benefits in using the virtual experience. Its efficacy too in remote learning was increasingly topical.

There were no technical barriers to using Elluminate to increase virtual contact between staff and students in Norwich and UEA London. SSF was exploring the use of Elluminate in PPD training and with part-time students. FOH was working with part-time post-registration students. Feedback included reports that it is a near- conference experience.

The current licence was due to expire in 2013. The cost of a full licence was approximately £50k per annum (around which figure ISD might be able to negotiate). As some courses were being set-up around the use of Elluminate it was requested that the licensing issue receive attention well in advance. The forthcoming LTC Educational Strategies day on 5 May would include IT developments, and so consideration of where priorities in investment should be, such as audio streaming or lecture capture, would be timely Part of the consideration should also include discussion on support and servicing and cross-over issues into collaborative working (which SSF is exploring) as there were implications for successfully bidding for research funds.)

4. ENHANCING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE : LEARNING AND TEACHING DAY

The outline arrangements for the Learning and Teaching Day on Tuesday 3 May 2011 were noted.

5. POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAMMES POLICY GROUP

The Committee considered a report from the policy group and endorsed the following:

5.1 the proposed revised Guidance Note on the definition of Category 'A' and staff candidates and the assignment of PGR students into Category A or Category B in accordance with the proposed guidelines

5.2 the review of external examiners' reports 2009-10 which concluded that external examiners continued to be very positive about candidates' work and performance in the viva and indicative of a clear position of confidence in the quality and standards of research degrees at the University.

The Committee recommended that:

- 5.3 the proposed recommendation for a threshold to be established regarding skills training for laboratory and fieldwork demonstrators be reconsidered by the Policy Group.

The Committee welcomed the Policy Group's continuing discussions with regard to supervisory requirements, noting that current proposals under consideration included a definition of informal and formal supervision, the number of supervisory meetings required per year and requirements for refresher training. It was likely that one of the outputs of the internal review of supervision would be an updated good practice guide. Another was a requirement that all new supervisors would need to complete a training course and a top-up training course every three years. Members looked forward to receiving proposals at a future meeting of the Committee.

It was noted that the Director of Research Programmes had conducted an informal review of what PGR students and their supervisors considered to be the three key characteristics of a good supervisory experience. Whilst responses were relatively low, both groups were in agreement with regard to the highest ranked characteristics, these being: availability, sensitivity/support; and academic guidance including provision of prompt and timely feedback.

The Committee expressed concern that the rate of response from Science on the annual review of progress forms for 2009-10 was poorer than for the other Faculties (recognising that the Associate Dean (PGR) had been very tenacious in his efforts). This would need to improve.

The Committee was encouraged by the overall confidence in the quality and standards of research degrees at the University. This would be reported to Senate. Examiners had identified problems with presentation, referencing and typographic errors in some theses and this had prompted the Policy Group to produce guidelines regarding the use of proof-readers. There were also constructive comments about the regulations for the PhD by Publication, training and support for students and on a few regulatory and procedural matters which would be looked at by the Policy Group.

The Committee noted the update with regard to PGR Skills Training and Roberts funding, welcomed in particular the development of a "Work Ready" programme on 13 May 2011 aimed at improving the basic business skills of PGR students.

The Committee requested that the Policy Group revisit the issue of training required to be undertaken by PGR students who are laboratory and fieldwork demonstrators. The threshold of 12 hours per year for determining the level of training required (the full CSED Teaching Skills course or tailored School-based training) needed further consideration both in terms of whether there were several activities being demonstrated or if there is one activity being demonstrated repeatedly. There was also a need for monitoring within Schools of the quality of demonstration. PRPPG would also reconsider the relationship between the CSED- and Faculty-run courses and accreditation issues.

It was clarified that there were four sessions of 3-hours, not 3 sessions of School-based training in HUM, and the HUM website needed to be amended.

Members of the Committee were invited to respond to the Secretary of the Policy Group in respect of the consultation by the Quality Assurance Agency on the characteristics of doctoral degrees and agreed that the outcomes of the University's consideration would be conveyed to a future meeting of the Committee.

6. UEA LONDON

The Committee considered an update from the Dean of UEA London, and an updated action plan from the LTC UEA London sub-group.

A number of issues reported by students and being considered by the management team were around IT services and the sense of being part of the wider UEA community. The existence of an Almanac might help the Library and other groups to identify appropriate opportunities to be a presence in key places at key times. This might also help strengthen the sense of connection with Norwich and the issues surrounding identity.

The terms of the SLA regarding IT services had been clarified: INTO UEA London students and staff do not have access to UEA Blackboard, because of the involvement with City University and the consequent licensing restrictions.

Contrary to the indication in the report, approval for the NBS Masters and IBM courses had not yet been given; further details of outstanding actions were provided in the updated action plan.

Space issues were being addressed in London with the involvement of key stakeholders in Norwich. Making private space available for prayer was being investigated.

The evidence from the recent Masters Staff Student Liaison Committee was that IT services and availability and links with UEA Norwich were key problem areas.

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

Oral reports from Faculty Associate Deans were considered by the Committee.

FOH reported that it was holding a strategy half-day to discuss employment, assessment and feedback issues, and the desire to have less constraining marking descriptors that would allow a wider use of the marking range.

HUM, SCI and SSF reported that their Faculties were engaged in consideration of the new academic model, which would be the focus of the additional meeting of the Committee on 27 April.

8. PARTNERSHIPS OFFICE ACTIVITY

8.1 A report from the Partnerships Office was considered.

The Committee resolved to:

8.1.1 give formal recognition to the name of the London Academy of Diplomacy (LAD) (being a part of INTO UEA London) as a brand for the suite of UEA-validated courses in the area of International Diplomacy.

8.1.2 to confirm approval in principle to two further Masters courses to be offered by the London Academy of Diplomacy:

- MA in International Communication and Diplomacy
- MA in International Security and Diplomacy

8.1.3 to grant approval in principle to the following course proposals from other partner institutions:

City College, Norwich

- BA (Hons) Creative Practice and Enterprise (One year top-up from Foundation Degree)
- BA (Hons) Leadership and Management (One year top-up from Foundation Degree) subject to comments from the School of Education and Lifelong Learning with regard to potential competition issues with the University's top-up programme, BA (Hons) in Professional Studies

Easton College

- BSc (Hons) Equitation and Coaching
- BSc (Hons) Agriculture

8.2 With regard to the London School of Diplomacy it was noted that:

8.2.1 discussions were taking place about the potential for the delivery of the Diplomacy suite of courses at other locations outside the UK. Should these developments come to fruition (ie following successful validation) the intention would be to adopt the same name style at each of the locations, e.g. the Paris Academy of Diplomacy, etc.

8.2.2 in addition to the diplomacy courses, developments in the area of applied languages were planned in collaboration with UEA's School of Language and Communication Studies. With these plans in mind, consideration was being given to an overarching title (in addition to LAD) that would encompass both the diplomatic courses and any potential related applied language provision. Details would be brought to LTC once plans are at a more advanced stage.

8.2.3 LAD students were part of the University's joint venture with INTO UEA. (The Partnerships Office undertook to clarify students' status with the Library so that issues such as electronic access to resources and head-count for licensing purposes could be considered with confidence.

8.2.4 the MA courses had yet to receive final 'sign-off' by the Joint Board of Study, but had already been considered at a validation event.

8.3 With regard to regional partners: City College, Norwich and Easton College, it was noted that:

8.3.1 validation of courses at regional partners were a clear indication of the University's commitment to supporting widening participation. The terms of the OFFA letter raised the importance of this type of activity and commitment.)

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

9.1 The Committee gave approval in principle to:

School of Political, Social and International Studies
MA in Broadcast Journalism: Theory and Practice.

The Committee also granted approval to the course proceeding to recruitment ahead of full sign-off of the course proposal at the next Faculty LTQC.

It was noted that HUM would be seeking a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 for students from non-English speaking backgrounds with the overall 6.5 comprising a minimum score of 7.0 in written and spoken English. It was also noted that previous concerns raised by the Committee (such as the incorporation of Media Law and discussion with SSF about this and the use of the studio) had been resolved. Students would be able to use facilities at EPIC and BBC Norwich as well as the on-site studio. The course was confirmed as being 12 months (1 year) in duration. The Partnerships Office would facilitate discussion between HUM and CCN with regard to contacts for placements for CCN's undergraduate journalism course.

9.2 The Committee considered a report on an audit of new courses approved by the Associate Deans and Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee in accordance with the University's Code of Practice: Assuring and Enhancing Teaching Quality. It was resolved that:

9.2.1 that further guidance be given to Faculty Executives and FLTQCs in respect of the cumulative effect of the introduction of a number of new course proposals. This would be incorporated within the policy document.

9.2.2 there should be a clearer route for the Committee to consider in full any new course proposal where it deems that there are relevant issues for discussion. This too would become part of the policy document.

9.2.3 further guidance be given to Faculties in respect of communicating and recording within Quality files of the consideration of Business Cases by Faculty Executives. This will also become part of the policy document.

9.2.4 the Planning Office be asked to develop a template for costing new courses.

In discussion it was noted:

- that examination of the new course approval process has revealed that appropriate linkage with Admissions could be improved, noting that poor recruitment to courses is considered at RAMP but not LTC.
- the process should state more explicitly that any course proposal can be considered in full by LTC if particular issues make it appropriate to do so. There might be need for a sub-group of LTC to sift course proposal business to bring critical issues to the attention of the full LTC. This might help stimulate a more robust system for bringing about course closure. Course closures are in Section C of the LTC agenda and might require labelling to make course closures more prominent.
- the links between the business and the academic cases needs to be considered in any future review of the new course proposal process.

10. LTC REVIEWS

Oral reports were considered on:

10.1 the new academic model

In discussion it was noted that:

10.1.1 consultation responses from Schools were now being received. The response of the Union of UEA Students to the proposals was welcomed and was now available to view on the new academic model website. The most prominent issues turned on module choice and size (credits).

10.1.2 LTC would be asked to agree to a minimum size of module, which might be 20 credits.

10.1.3 LTC would also be asked to consider course templates as a way forward.

10.1.4 there were concerns about use of language referring to restricted choice, rather than defined choice. This ('restricted choice') did not accurately reflect the situation and should be avoided. The University had identified that "free" choice could be constrained and by creating a defined module range which better fitted the objectives of a course and with the timetable. There would be greater clarity and understanding around 'choice';

10.1.5 HUM had undertaken a lot of work at Faculty level, and had considered course redesign alongside the new funding regime from 2012 by asking the question, will students do this course at £9,000 per annum? Issues had focussed on module choice, 3-hour exams, synoptic assessment – which was often misunderstood and might be better relabelled course-level outcomes - the balance of formative and

summative work, student concern with fewer items of counting work, and use of the six week University examination period.

10.1.6 in SCI there was no apparent desire to move to module credit values above 20, in general.

10.1.7 in SSF there was mixed level of enthusiasm for moving to larger modules (in terms of credit value) largely in courses where there would be professional accreditation implications of any such changes.

10.1.8 PGT course proposals from summer 2011 needed to consider the principles of the new academic model.

10.1.9 some of the concerns around the notion of interdisciplinarity of courses was misplaced, given that it could be argued that what UEA offers is opportunities for multidisciplinary study. This perspective would require further consideration and discussion.)

10.2 Programme Monitoring and Review Group

In some SCI Schools there was concern that the light touch approach would take something away from the process of staff monitoring and development via annual academic evaluation of modules. It was felt that module monitoring had previously provided hard data on staff performance which determined who might benefit from peer support. The student view was that the onus should not be on students to identify poor teaching - this must be at senior management level. It was also noted that at the last meeting of LTC it was agreed that peer review of teaching every two years (as a minimum) would be mandatory and that this would be a means to put in place more support, development and training, where needed.

Apart from the efficiency driver for a light touch approach, module evaluation had had little to offer in respect of helping students progress through a course. The student view was that feedback should be contributing to the monitoring and improvement of courses, rather than the narrower focus on modules. It was also noted that whilst the evidence suggested that students like modules, feedback from the NSS, on the other hand, reveals concerns about courses. It was considered that the University would benefit more from annual course-level surveys which could be compared with NSS responses to see the effect of the University's responses to student feedback, for example.

An observation that had emerged following the recent University-wide consultation on assessment with the new academic model was it was not entirely clear that quality assurance processes were in fact looking at the right things. This was an issue to be further considered in the development of assessment strategies.

11. PROGRAMME MONITORING AND REVIEW 2011/2012

11.1 The Committee considered a report and endorsed the proposal that Programme Reviews scheduled for 2011-12 should be deferred by one year only to 2012-13 with a consequent deferral of all subsequent reviews.

In endorsing this proposal, members:

11.1.1 noted that there were two main drivers: the development of the new academic model and the parallel Integration Project.

11.1.2 were confident that quality and standards would not be put at risk as a consequence, noting that external examiners' reports consistently show that academic standards were appropriate and had raised no significant concerns about the structure or content of courses. Nor had Programme Reviews indicated serious causes for concern.

11.1.3 were reassured that the proposed deferral would still mean that every course in the University would have been reviewed within the last five years up to this point and no review would occur more than six years since the previous review under this one-off deferral.

11.1.4 were informed that the scheduled review of provision in NAM in 2011-12 related to post-registration courses, not pre-registration courses.

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

The Committee received minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee or SSF and FOH:

13. PARTNERSHIPS

The Committee received a report.

14. AUDIT OF APPOINTMENT OF BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

The Committee received a report.

15. NEW COURSE PROPOSALS

The Committee received a report (including course closures).

16. OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

The Committee received a report on the number of "Completion Internal Processes" issued by UEA during the calendar year, 2010, as required under new OIA rules.

17. UNIVERSITIES UK : EUROPE UNIT

It was reported to the Committee that the Europe Unit has published a booklet entitled "European Higher Education in facts and figures", and this may be viewed at http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/sites/europe_unit2/resources/Europe%20unit_stats%20booklet.FINAL.pdf).

18. FUNDING OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The Committee received a copy of the letter from the Office For Fair Access.

19. SOCIAL NETWORKING: GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

The Committee received a copy of the guidance issued by the Faculty of Health to students on appropriate use of social networking sites.

20. EXTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

The Committee received a copy of the University's responses to:

20.1 the consultation by the Office of Independent Adjudicator with regard to the Pathway Consultation – 2nd round. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. LTC10D072)

20.2 the consultation by the Quality Assurance Agency on proposed changes to the Academic Infrastructure.

20.3 the joint consultation by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, Universities UK and GuildHE on proposals for the provision of public information about higher education.

20.4 1994 Group response to the HEFCE/UUK/GuildHE joint consultation on changes to information published by institutions.

The following items were considered by the Learning and Teaching Committee at its meeting on 18 May 2011, and are presented for the Senate's information.

1. STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

1.1 Integration Project: creation of student hubs.

1.1.1 Estates was aware of central student-facing activities only, such as the current examination series. A note has been circulated to Heads of Schools advising them of the situation and that they need to take action to minimise the impact on any other activities, such as localised teaching or revision sessions;

1.1.2 The noise from the building work had been reported as a disturbance in some residences, resulting in a non-academic complaint in one case. Speedy resolution had been possible via the assistance of Schools (in particular the School of Education and Lifelong Learning) which had identified a number of quiet rooms which would be appropriate for use as student revision rooms. The Schools were thanked for their prompt response and support

1.1.3 The Library space was being heavily used with capacity usually being reached by 11am each day. The Library was also working with Heads of Schools to find additional quiet revision rooms.

1.1.4 The University's internal communication of the building works had been criticised by students, with the main issue being raised "why now?". It was noted that the timescale for the integration project and the importance of having the student hubs ready by 1 August and the new session had meant that the building work could not be suspended during the examination period. As indicated above, the University had sought to minimise noise and disruption by putting in place alternative quiet revision areas, had relocated to the Thomas Paine building the examination venue for students requiring individual arrangements and had introduced a complaints process with specific reference to the building work)

1.2 The use of Library space has changed.

1.2.1 the increased usage of the Library of 34.4% - which was most encouraging - was similar to the increased use of the Dean of Students Office in the Autumn Semester 2010/11 of 37%.

1.2.2 The Committee congratulated the Library on the changes to the building which has evidently been an excellent response to students' needs. It had been noticed by several members of the Committee that students appeared to be using the Library more and staying longer, and the figures above supported that notion (iii) the social space in the vicinity of ENV also appeared to be well used – again a positive development. This was an, however, an observation, as no usage figures are collected..)

1.3 The Learning and Teaching Day on 3 May was well attended, with nearly double the numbers of attendees from the previous year.

1.4 The Learning and Teaching Strategies Day on 5 May

1.4.1 the Committee will watch with interest how the information captured during the day will be carried forward into the resulting strategy. A lot of work has been done post-event to record comments and output from the day. The event was well attended

by committed and engaged administrators, but greater numbers of academics are required to engage with the development of the learning and teaching strategy. One of the ways of achieving this would be through the development of the new academic model.

1.4.2 The Facilitate.pro site will remain open to allow for further thoughts and discussion.)

1.5 The current Associate Dean for L&T (SSF), Dr Sara Connolly, will be finishing her term of office from 31 July 2011. Dr Helena Gillespie (EDU) will take over the post from 1 August 2011.

1.6 The current Associate Dean for L&T (HUM), Mr Ian Farr, will be finishing his term of office from 31 July 2011. Dr Sanna Inthorn (PSI) will take over the post from 1 August 2011.

The Chair thanked Sara and Ian for their contributions over the years, noting that more formal expressions of thanks would follow at the LTC's final meeting of the session on 29 June, 2011, which would be chaired by the PVC (Academic).

1.7 UEA ranked 18th overall in the Guardian league table, up from 19th in 2010.

2. CONFIRMATION OF CHAIR'S ACTION

Chair's action was taken in approving the following new prizes and awards and amendments to existing ones:

2.1 The Graham Everest Memorial Prize (MTH)

2.2 The George Duncan Memorial Prize (BIO): an increase in value from £100 to £250 with immediate effect

2.3 The Ranworth Trust Scholarship (BIO)

2.4 The Simon Wharmby Postgraduate Scholarship in Environmental Sciences (ENV)

2.5 The Poetry Writing Scholarship. (LCW)

2.6 HUM PGR Prizes

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY

The Committee considered changes to the QAA's audit methodology.

In discussion it was noted that there are, broadly, four main areas of changes:

3.1 increased focus on the student experience, with students being full members of the audit team, the creation of the role of student facilitator being created, working alongside the institutional facilitator and more students meeting the audit team;

3.2 the outcomes to judgements, with a pass/fail in respect of meeting (or not) threshold academic standards and graded outcomes on quality and enhancement. There will also be a judgement in respect of the accuracy and completeness of the information that the University publishes about itself.

3.3 there will be a thematic audit element each year; for example, the first year experience. Although this would not be graded, there would be commentary on it in the audit report.

3.4 action plans to be devised and published. It is possible that some of the audit recommendations could come with expected timescales for parts of the action plan to be completed.

It was also noted that:

3.5 in a recent QAA briefing session, attendees were informed that there would also be more attention paid to external examiners' reports, and that external examiners will be interviewed, possibly by video conferencing, as part of the audit process;

3.6 one of the consequences of having expected timescales on some aspects of the resulting action plans is that a judgement may not stand for the full period between audits;

3.7 there might be further changes to the audit process as a consequence of the White Paper;

3.8 the Committee will consider an update on the institutional action plan from the 2009 audit at its next meeting;

3.9 It is possible that the QAA will contact us in 2011/12 to arrange an interim visit. The latest we can expect the next full audit is 2014/15.

4. PROGRAMME MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Committee considered a report.

In discussion it was noted that:

4.1 the MCM3 reports from FOH, HUM and SCI will be available at the next meeting on 29 June;

4.2 SSF reported five main areas of concern for the attention of the Committee, the second of which related to concerns about the future of administrative and teaching support. Senior members of support staff in attendance at the meeting informed members that workshops and other events had already started to allow support staff in the new structure to consider new processes and identify any areas where training and/or other action was required in order to facilitate a smooth transition to the new integrated support structure. The workshops were concentrating on processes scheduled for August, September and October to ensure a well-organised start to the session and its immediate aftermath; ;

4.3 on the issues of language and academic writing there were particular concerns about international students for whom English was not their first language. The Dean of Students expressed interest in this area and welcomed closer working with academic colleagues, as the Dean of Students' Office was working on support material and tracking students through their studies to gauge the effectiveness of the support provided;

4.4 the desire for clearer requirements for student attendance and engagement was raised. The issue has been partly addressed through the recent review of disciplinary and related procedures which had resulted in changes to General Regulation 13 for the 2010/11 academic year. The impact of this change had already been felt in some areas and one School (CMP) had reported improved attendance as a result. It was noted that the comments in the report pre-dated the changes to this regulation. It was considered that issues with attendance and engagement were often a transitional issue and were mostly, but not entirely, a problem for Year 1 students. When transition into higher education occurred at Year 2 the problems arising seemed to more about communication of expectations as opposed to an engagement problem. Communication with students under the new structure should be given more thought.

5. EXTERNAL EXAMINERS' REPORTS: PGT and UG

The Committee considered a report and resolved that the draft report be commended to Senate, with minor amendments.

In discussion it was noted that:

5.1 the QAA would place greater emphasis on the content of external examiner reports and the processes we have in place to address any issues raised;

5.2 it was pleasing to note that there was strong evidence that Schools were taking external examiners' comments seriously and responding to them. Furthermore, external examiners' had noticed that action had been taken and had reported on this favourably in some reports;

5.3 the issue of whether or not the University should consider awarding PGT degrees with Merit was raised in one report. This was a matter that should be considered by Schools and Course Directors when reviewing the Common Masters Framework in relation to the new academic model;

5.4 the report would be considered by the Senate at its meeting on 15 June, and, if approved, would then be placed on the LTQ website.

6. DEGREE CLASSIFICATIONS

The Committee considered a report.

In discussion it was noted that:

6.1 various league tables of UK universities use "good degrees" (i.e. the number of Firsts and Upper Seconds combined) as a performance indicator. The University's position was generally solid in comparison with other HEIs but might be expected to be higher than some competitors having regard to the improving 'input' in respect of rising entry qualifications and more favourable Staff:Student ratios;

6.2 for students seeking to go on to postgraduate study and research degrees having a First was increasingly regarded as essential to secure funding and studentships. Increasing the number of Firsts awarded and, therefore, increasing the opportunities available to graduates would have a positive impact on the University's reputation and employability rates. This situation might be partially achieved through the new academic model which envisaged more formative assessment and feed-forward strategies to aid student learning;

6.3 other factors influencing the 'good degree' figures were student backgrounds and subject marking cultures.. Some Schools which appeared to award a high proportion of Lower Seconds saw very different outcomes when filtering results by fees status, where "overseas" can be a good proxy for non-native English speakers. The international student experience was being examined in several areas of the University and student-tracking reports had been written which would allow the University to monitor the situation. There might be an immediate impact arising from changes to the English language requirements laid down by the UK Border Agency such that students would have to reach a threshold IELTS score in each element and not just the overall score. There also appeared to continue to be a reluctance in some areas to use the full marking scale in relation to marking criteria, despite repeated encouragement and exhortation to do so by the Committee and by external examiners;

6.4 the Committee noted that the Project Officer for the review of assessment would finish in post on 31 July 2011 and that any further statistics of this nature would in future need to be produced by the Planning Office.

7. POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAMMES POLICY GROUP

The Committee considered a report and resolved the following:

- 7.1 that the proposed changes to the timetable for the ClinPsyD from 2011/12 be approved
- 7.2 that the PGR Skills Training Steering Group be disbanded at the end of the 2010/11 academic session, its business being considered by the PGR Policy Group.

In discussion about the changes to the ClinPsyD it was noted that:

7.1.1 the requirement of the Strategic Health Authority (SHA) that students should complete the programme within one month of the published end date of the programme had prompted the proposals;

7.1.2 the proposed changes would be of benefit to students and allow graduates to take employment at the qualified pay band rather than the training pay band;

7.1.3 the balance of the research and taught elements of the degree would not be changed by altering the submission date for the thesis. would not alter the time on each element. All stakeholders in the qualification consulted and were supportive. The requirement for external examiners to be available at a different point in the cycle should not prove problematic, since external examiners are appointed for the viva of individual students but the position would be monitored. The changes to the programme should help ameliorate the issue of very few students completing within one month of the published end date of the programme and the resultant problem of meeting SHA targets.

7.1.4 the issues faced when considering these changes were national, and other institutions were responding similarly to these external pressures.

In the discussion on the work of the PGR Skills Training Steering Group, it was noted that:

7.2.1 the PGR Skills Training Group had been established in response to the need to meet and report upon the 'Robert's' agenda. Following University review, skills training is now embedded in the Faculties and well-established. Skills Training is a standing item on the agenda of the PGR Policy Group where any further discussion needed will take place;;

7.2.2 the work on the PPD brochure for next year was underway and expected to be completed on time

In considering the review of PGR supervision, members welcomed the proposed changes, noting that:

7.3 the changes to the Code of Practice on the frequency of supervision would be completed and submitted to the Committee at its next meeting;

7.4 from 1 August, 2011, the new PGR, Partnerships and Equality and Diversity service would be responsible for keeping records of supervisor training, given that the proposed penalty for not training or retraining would be sanctions on having supervisees;.

In discussing research degree fees, members:

7.5 noted that the Policy Group was reviewing the current charging policy whilst students were on fieldwork for over three months. In the course of this review, the Group would consult the School of International Development and the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Art where the majority of students undertaking fieldwork were registered;

In the discussion on PRES it was pleasing that:

7.6 UEA had achieved a 40% response rate, which was well above the national average of 30%, and might allow for some School-level information to be available when results were released to the University.)

8. UEA LONDON

The Committee received an oral update.

The action plan was being monitored and regularly reviewed. The next formal review would be at the June meeting of the JV Board in London.

Arrangements for the commencement of the new undergraduate courses were well in hand, being very close to completion and expected to be finalised by the end of May. Fortnightly meetings were being held in preparation for the new intake which was proving particularly helpful in clarifying objectives, and had produced a plan of work to ensure a focus on the immediate priorities.

Two additional members of support staff had been appointed at UEA to support UEA London programmes and a proposal for three additional staff at UEA London was due to be considered by the JV Board. A new Academic Director had been appointed for INTO UEA London which presaged a period of stability for the teaching support teams. The Dean of Students' Office was also working closely with the student support team but more discussions were needed regarding careers.

There had been feedback from some UEA Masters students that, whilst their course experience was positive, they felt that the balance of 'brand' between UEA provision at UEA London and INTO UEA provision at INTO UEA London appeared to favour the latter. This perception might be redressed when increased numbers of UEA students registered in September, but there also needed to be involvement at the senior managerial level to ensure that the high quality UEA student experience is also felt in London as well as in Norwich.

The Library sub-group had been looking at space development at London. The Union of UEA Students had been involved and had also looked more widely into the provision of student support and learning resources. The Union was organising student focus groups, one at UEA Norwich and the other at UEA London, to meet in June. The outcomes would be awaited with interest. A report on student support at UEA London would be received in due course.

9. LTC REVIEWS

The Committee considered oral reports on the following:

- 9.1 Module Monitoring, Course Update and Programme Review
- 9.2 Appeals and Complaints
- 9.3 New academic model
- 9.4 Disciplinary review

In discussion on the review of module monitoring and course update it was noted that:

9.1.1 the Review Group was due to meet for what had been planned to be the last time on 16 May but now required at least one more meeting;

9.1.2 it was likely the review would recommend that the focus for monitoring and update should in the future be done routinely at the course level rather than module level, but that each module should be monitored at least once in five years. There would also be certain triggers for additional module-level monitoring, for example a new module, new module organiser or suggestions of particular issues in a more risk-based approach to module monitoring. Student evaluation of each module would in future be optional as the proposed focus would move to course level with students' views invited annually on their experience (see (iii) below);

9.1.3 student evaluation of the course would be in the style of the annual NSS with space for some additional questions, including about their experience of modules. It was proposed that the survey would be run under the auspices of the new Business Intelligence Unit of the Planning Office. The timing had not yet been decided but would be made with "survey fatigue" in mind in order to minimise any negative impact on students which might result in low response rates;

9.1.4 There was likely to be a pilot of the new style of course monitoring and review in LCS in 2011/12 before the new system was rolled out across the institution.

In discussion on programme review it was noted that:

9.1.5 there needed to be a stronger focus on the review event itself;

9.1.6 the final report of the group will make recommendations about transitional arrangements, but it was likely that module monitoring and course update would continue as normal for most Schools in 2011/12. (Members were reminded that the Committee had previously agreed that programme reviews could be postponed during 2011-12 to allow for the new integrated administrative structure to bed down – except where PSRBs required them);

In the discussion on appeals and complaints it was noted that:

9.2.1 this was a substantial agenda which will be fully considered under the new Director of Taught Programmes in 2011/12. The related issue of extenuating circumstances would have to be discussed in order fully to review appeals, in particular;

In discussion on the disciplinary review it was noted that:

9.2.2 the new procedure had been in place from n 2010/11 and the experiences of its operation would be reviewed to see if minor amendments were required for the 2011/12 session;.

In discussion on the new academic model it was noted that:

9.3.1 The issues were discussed at a meeting of Heads of Schools on 9 May;

9.3.2 work had commenced on other regulatory frameworks , such as Integrated Masters and PGT. At PGT level there were issues over examination periods and timetables. The sense that UEA was too focussed on UG provision was a theme, with the academic year being a particular issue;

9.3.3 more generally, it had been noted that if the rules on module enrolment were changed, it was possible that examination timetables could be released earlier, which would be a huge gain;.

9.3.4 more attention needed to be given to joint courses;

9.3.5 the matter of semesters abroad being possible on courses running 3 x 40 credit year-long modules was raised. For one School considering this model there were no students taking a semester abroad and this was not a matter for concern.)

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

The Committee considered oral reports from Faculty Associate Deans

HUM – a report will be brought to the next meeting of the Committee;

FOH – the annual quality assurance assessment of the Faculty’s performance in relation to its contract with the SHA had now been completed. Over all, the outcome was a great success, with most aspects of consideration being given a ‘green’ light (on a traffic-light system of assessment). One element had been initially given a ‘red’ (in respect of completion rates for midwifery programmes) but on subsequent follow-up, the SHA had relaxed its tolerance bands and the outcome was now satisfactory. The Faculty was looking at how it might improve systems for earlier assessment, reassessment and feedback which could be especially beneficial for students going on placement. Congratulations were extended to the Faculty on this outcome which also had a financial benefit to the Faculty

- NAM had topped the recently published Guardian League Table as the best for nursing in England (and took third place overall). Congratulations were extended.

SSF – with regard to the work being done on the new academic model, there were concerns relating to the implications for PSRB accreditation. At present, there were a number of 10-credit modules taken in Year 2 Psychology. The proposal for a minimum 20-credit module size might need to be relaxed in this case if the situation could potentially result in losing course accreditation. This matter was still being explored. Members recognised that in a limited number of cases, concessions against the 20-credit proposed minimum value of modules might be required under the new model;

SCI - with regard to the work being done on the new academic model, there were similar concerns over module sizes in relation to the natural sciences course, which the Faculty regarded highly and did not want to disturb greatly.

11. PARTNERSHIPS

The Committee considered a report from the Joint Boards/Committees confirming re-validations and course closures.

12. ITEMS FOR REPORT

12.1 FACULTY ASSOCIATE DEANS (LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY)

The Committee received minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee from FOH (2 March 2011).

12.2 PARTNERSHIPS

The Committee received a report.

12.3 TAUGHT PROGRAMMES POLICY GROUP

The Committee considered a report on:

- New Academic Model
- Review of Academic Appeals and Academic Complaints
- Evidence for Absences from Course Tests
- Feedback to Students on Assessment
- Marking of Offensive Material
- NSS 2010 and PTES 2010
- Quoracy of Assessment Boards
- Marking Scales
- Networking Problems and Future Planning

12.4 CODE OF PRACTICE: PEER OBSERVATION OF TEACHING

The Committee noted that this new Code had been signed off by the Chair of the Committee and would be widely circulated. It was planned that there would be an academic practice event early in the new session to promulgate the new Code.