

LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4 July 2012 at 2 pm

Present: Dr Ben Milner (Chair), Dr Alan Bond (ENV), Dr Nigel Clayden (CHE), Prof David Evans (MTH), Dr Paul Grassby (PHA), Steve Jackman (ITCS, Director for Faculty IT Support), Dr Helen James (BIO), Dr Martin Loftus (NatSci), Dr Geoff McKeown (CMP) with Julia Jones (Secretary).

Apologies: Inga Birzakova (UUEAS Science Faculty Convenor), Dr Ros Boar (ENV), Meg Evans (UUEAS Academic Officer), Professor David Wright (PHA)

Welcome and introductions

A1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

Considered the minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 May 2012. The minutes were confirmed as an accurate record.

Updates and action points:

A2.2 Processfix report not yet sent to members; **Action: Chair to request a copy from DUS.**

A6 The Chair had discussed the process for responses to External Examiners reports with LTS, and the process would be updated. It was noted that the BIO External Examiners had not received responses to their comments until they returned the following year; the BIO EEs had liked this.

A9 Some DLTs had still not received module evaluation data; **Action: Chair to follow up again.**

A10 Science with Borders Brazilian students; the Chair confirmed that some would begin at UEA 1.5 years into their course and some at 2.5 years.

A2. STATEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

Received statements from the Chair:

A2.1 An email from the Registrar and Secretary had invited comments on the new administrative arrangements. The Chair recommended collating and sending School responses, rather than individual responses. Members supported this

suggestion. The Committee was keen that individuals in the Hub did not feel they were being criticised for any systemic inadequacies, so it was agreed that the Chair should send an email to the EFRY Hub thanking staff for their hard work throughout the past year.

Action: Chair to send email of thanks to EFRY Hub

A2.2 Peer assisted learning: the Academic Director of Taught Programmes, Dr Adam Longcroft, had attended the Science Faculty Executive to give a presentation on Peer Assisted Learning. The Faculty was keen (particularly as PAL had been shown to be beneficial for Employability) but had reservations about the costings.

A3. STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF UNIVERSITY GROUPS

Received

Oral reports from members of University groups on matters of interest to the Committee as follows:

- Employability (Nigel Clayden)
 - This group has not met recently and may have been replaced by the new Employability Executive.
- ISD Education Board (Geoff McKeown)
 - Steve Jackman is also a member of this Committee and reported that the Group has been considering online marking, with some academics trialling this in order to identify themes to guide a wider pilot.
 - Any move to online marking would be very gradual.
 - Experiences had been varied, and it was unlikely that one solution would work for everyone; the process would need flexibility in order to allow people to use different tools in different places etc.
 - The larger pilot will ask for student feedback / opinions.
- TPPG (Ros Boar)
 - Ros Boar was unable to attend.
- Internal Moderation and Double Marking Working Group (Helen James)
 - HJ had sent the latest version of the procedure and moderation form to DLTs for comment and feedback.
- Appeals and Complaints Working Group (Nigel Clayden)
 - The new regulations on Appeals and Complaints were submitted to the LTC meeting of 27 June.
 - Each Faculty was to have an Appeals and Complaints panel, with the Hubs collecting and supplying evidence.
 - Stage 2 appeals would only be considered on the grounds of processes not being correctly followed.
 - The regulations on Extenuating Circumstances were still unfinished.

A4. STATEMENTS FROM STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

No student representatives were present.

A5. IT TEACHING SPACE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE

Discussed
the above:

Steve Jackman, ITCS, was present.

- Steve Jackman reported that the University has 120 centrally (rather than Faculty) bookable rooms, all of which have some IT or AV equipment.
- Variation in quality / age; there is a systematic programme for refreshing, but the budget is limited.
- 17 rooms are to have their AV equipment refreshed over the summer.
- As rooms are refurbished the equipment will be standardised; meanwhile signs will be provided with information on how to use the equipment.
- Estates are working out a (fairly low) baseline specification for teaching spaces in terms of decor, furniture, AV and IT.
- Estates are updating 2 rooms this summer (1 seminar room, 1 lecture room) as an experiment to see how they will be received; comments to be invited.
- Centrally bookable IT labs have a 5 year refresh schedule for PCs, with mice and keyboards refreshed annually, and the build refreshed every semester.
- Different Schools / Faculties have different requirements in terms of AV and IT.
- SJ does not have a remit to create or re-organise spaces, but can put IT in empty spaces.
- School Teaching Directors commented on the requirements of their Schools. Many of the comments were generic; some were School-specific:
 - Large BIO Year 1 Maths groups need IT labs (multiple rooms or running the session several times).
 - BIO Year 2 modules use the BIO-MTH lab, having to run each session 4 times
 - SJ pointed out that the 2 large IT labs can be run in tandem, providing 150 seats in all.
 - Some rooms (eg in the CD Annex) have the data projector screen covering the whiteboard, meaning that lectures can't use both at once.
 - Many members of Faculty need to use Blackboards (especially MTH, CHE and Natural Sciences), in seminar and lecture rooms.
 - CMP Students would like some of the software in CMP labs to be available in the library.
 - Sometimes equipment does not work or takes an extremely long time to start up - SJ commented that we may be moving to a system where computers wake themselves up at 8.30 am.
 - The consensus was that lecturers did not want to take their own laptops to the room.
 - When a data projector bulb goes it has to be replaced by an outside contractor which takes time; SJ commented that when the issue is reported, AV services will supply a temporary portable projector.

- ENV has classes of 200+ in Year 1, and the IT rooms only hold 80-odd students. Adjacent rooms are not the answer when there is only one member of Faculty teaching, especially with increased fees. Already parents phone in to complain about their offspring failing to gain a place on GIS (which has to be capped at 80 because of facilities).
- An 100-seater room would help, as sessions could then be run twice instead of 3 times.
- SJ confirmed that the IT labs in the new Chancellor's Drive building would only seat 57; this is because the environmental brief precludes the use of cooling within the building.
- The proposal for the new Enterprise Centre is not yet complete, but it is unlikely that there will be large rooms.
- The Chair asked whether if the Faculty put in a case for a 100-seat IT lab, it would only be BIO and ENV who wanted to use it – consult Nigel Shed re room usage.
- There were times when the large IT rooms were underused, but this resulted from the difficulty of fitting teaching events into timetable slots.

Action: Chair / Secretary to ask Nigel Shed for data re use of large IT rooms

- SJ confirmed that there were 160 open access computers in the library, but that students want more; they don't want to go to another building.
- Students have their own devices but they want to use University computers, partly because they have the correct software – idea of virtual software environment on students' own devices to be explored.
- SJ is working with Processfix to improve the IT support and the IT helpdesk, and aims to have the helpdesk working properly by the next academic year.
- SJ would like IT managers to attend School Boards to liaise re School IT requirements.

A6. STUDENT EXPERIENCE SURVEY

Received

an oral report from the Chair on the above:

Action: Chair to circulate slides from Sreeparna Ghosh's survey presentation

- LTC had asked Schools to look at the results in detail and to respond.
- The ADTP had analysed the results for TPPG (the Chair circulated the ADTP's document).
- The consensus of the meeting was that the low response rate invalidated the results.
- Schools did not know the survey was happening so did not promote it.
- The questions were long and irrelevant.
- Some students pick the wrong School from the drop-down menu.

Action: Chair to feed back SCI LTQC comments to the Planning Office

A7. MODULE ENROLMENT PROCESS

Discussed

student comments on the above process (raised by Alan Bond, ENV):

- ENV students had expressed dissatisfaction with the process.
- Time lag between module presentations and the registering of choices.
- One week window to submit requests.
- Students did not hear anything c 6 weeks, with enrolments being confirmed (or not) in the exam period when they were already stressed.
- Students were having to submit new choices and were becoming demotivated during their revision period.
- Members felt that the slowness was because hub staff were busy; it was difficult for hubs to cope with module enrolment, room bookings and exam boards all at once.

Action: Chair to raise the issue of module enrolment at the LTS / ADs meeting

A8. NEW ACADEMIC MODEL (NAM) PROGRESS

Received

an oral report from the Chair re the LTC process and reviews of SCI courses received to date:

- LTC to approve (or not) UG NAM proposals 25 July.
- PGT process would begin shortly (to prepare for implementation in 2014/15).
- ADs want a slimmer process, starting later in the academic year, in order to finish dealing with the REF first – committee in agreement.

Action: Chair to negotiate with the ADTP for a later start for the PGT NAM process

A9. EMPLOYABILITY

Received

an oral report from the Chair on the SCI Employability session of 7 June 2012:

- Following the session, James Goodwin, Ben Milner, Kay Yeoman and Jenni Turner met to discuss the Employability week to be held in Week 4 of Semester 1 2012/13.
- Sessions were planned on:
 - CV writing and applying for jobs (including input from HR Managers and the Careers Service)
 - Networking and communication skills
 - Opportunities for SCI students.
- Each of these sessions would run 3 times across the week.
- School-specific sessions would also run.
- The sessions would be mainly for Year 3 students, plus other students if wished.
- Julie Schofield to run Internship talks for Year 2 students (and Year 1 if wished).
- Martin Loftus reminded colleagues to invite Natural Sciences students to Employability events.
- Jenni Turner was to make her ENV Employability module a SCI-wide module from 2013/14.

- Jenni, assisted by Lawrence Coates, was to offer staff training across the Faculty on embedding Employability into modules.
- A new University Employability Executive had been formed.
- £500,000 had been allocated to Schools and Faculties for the next academic year.
- Bids for this funding were to be submitted by 27 July 2012; the Chair was negotiating to have this deadline extended.

A10. INTERNATIONALISM

Received

an oral report from the Chair on applications from Science with Borders Brazilian students:

14 applications with 13 offers made:

- 1 in BIO
- 1 in CMP
- 6 in ENV
- 5 in PHA

Action: Chair to find out when Schools will know if their offers have been accepted

A11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS – to close

- There was concern that the new forms for annual course monitoring (recently sent out by LTS) were too long and the deadline too short.

Action: Chair to investigate the rationale for the new process

- NC reported that he had been informed at a Royal Society of Chemistry meeting about the possible formation of national subject committees to consider the A level curriculum.

SECTION B: ITEMS FOR REPORT

No items for report