

MINUTES of the 16 October 2017 meeting

Present:

Barbara Colledge (acting Chair)

Jeff Abrams

Glenn Bowdin

Lesley Earle

Priscilla Preston

Ian Truelove

Melissa Askew

Professor Andrew Cooper

Dr James Milligan

Joanna Smith

Dr Caroline Bligh

Professor John Craig

Jo Norry

Alan Smith

In attendance:

Rachel Bradford

Stuart Morris (Secretary)

Kirsty Curwen

Dr Sue Smith

Lee Jones

Apologies:

Professor Phil Cardew

Paul Ratcliff

Jack Harrison

Professor Ruth Pickford

Jim Durrant

Caroline Thomas

Part A: Preliminary Items

Terms of reference and membership

001.2017.AQS The Committee received and noted a report from the Secretary presenting the current terms of reference and membership (paper reference AQS-2017-001).

The following changes to the Committees membership were reported:

- (a) Alan Smith had replaced Dr Diane Lowcock as the representative from the School of Health & Community Studies
- (b) Paul Ratcliff had replaced Sarah Roe as the representative from the School of Film, Music and Performing Arts
- (c) Glenn Bowdin had replaced Suzanne Corazzi as the representative from the School of Events, Tourism and Hospitality Management
- (d) Jack Harrison had replaced Meg Robinson as the nominee of the Students' Union.

Declaration of interest

002.2017.AQS No declarations of interest were made.

Minutes

- 003.2017.AQS The Board / Committee **AGREED** that the minutes of its meeting held on 05 June 2017 (paper reference AQS-2017-002) were an accurate record subject to the following amendments:
- (a) Yvonne Marsh had not been in attendance and would be added to the list of apologies.
 - (b) Diane Lowcock had been recorded as both in attendance and as apologies and the minutes would be amended to reflect that she had provided apologies.

Matters arising

- 004.2017.AQS The Secretary presented a report on the matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting of the Board / Committee held on 05 June 2017 (paper reference AQS-2017-003).

It was **reported** that:

- (a) *Arising from minute 144.2016.AQS(v)*: Colleagues had provided the Associate Director (QA Framework and Processes) with the details of any courses that had been attributed to the incorrect school in relation to the Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body Update.
- (b) *Arising from minute 151.2016.AQS*: Academic Board approved the proposals for regulatory change at its meeting on 07 July 2017.
- (c) *Arising from minute 154.2016.AQS*: The proposed validation schedule had been recirculated to the Deans of School.
- (d) *Arising from minute 162.2016.AQS*: Governance & Legal Services continued to work with the Secretaries of the School Academic Committees to ensure that the summary reports provided information to the Committee in a clear and concise manner and that any key issues for AQSC to consider were clearly signposted.

Report from the Students' Union

- 005.2017.AQS
- (a) The Committee was presented with a report which summarized the recent work undertaken by the SU along with any key academic issues or developments (paper reference AQS-2017-004).
 - (b) The report provided an outline of the Sabbatical Officer objects for 2017/18; and a detailed overview of the SU's work concerning the future of academic representation at the University. Of particular note were the proposals to introduce a 'subject level' student representative and also the plans to improve the operation of the Student Forums.
- 006.2017.AQS
- (a) It was **noted** that the SU were not proposing that it should be a university policy to introduce lecture capture however it was confirmed that Centre for Learning & Teaching were providing advice and guidance on the benefits of

using the system and were promoting its wider adoption throughout the whole University.

- (b) It was noted that the SU had been arranging the student forums at School level however there had been some confusion over the dates of the meetings and it was also suggested that staff from Libraries & Learning Innovation (LLI) should be invited to forum meetings as it was felt that they would be able to provide a significant input into discussions.

007.2017.AQS The Committee **AGREED** that the SU would be asked to circulate the dates for School Forum meetings to Deans of School and would also be asked to invite a representative of LLI to forum meetings.

Chair's Report

- 008.2017.AQS (a) The Chair noted that an updated Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) year three specification was now available and would be sent to members of the Committee on request.
- (b) The Chair informed the Committee that two further consultations were also underway. The first consultation was being conducted by UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA) and sought views on a new approach to the Expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. The consultation sought to ensure that the Quality Code remained the cornerstone for quality in UK higher education, that it protected the public and student interest, and that it maintained the UK's world-leading reputation for quality in higher education. The consultation proposed reform from the highest level, starting with new, streamlined sector expectations. It was confirmed that the views of the Committee would be sought on our University's response before the close of the consultation on 13 December 2017.
- (c) The second consultation set out the context for the creation of the Office for Students and for the proposed regulatory approach. The consultation sought views on: the proposed risk-based regulatory approach for the higher education sector; the guidance on the conditions, behaviours and evidence for registration; and the approach to the transition of providers to the new regulatory framework. Views of the Committee would again be sought before the University sent its response.

Part B: Quality and Student Matters

Academic Assurance / AQSC Action Plan

- 009.2017.AQS (a) The Committee was presented with:
- (i) A report which provided an annual summary of evidence and data for outcomes in 2016/17 for institutional oversight and assurance of the

academic standards and academic quality of students' higher education and experience and the steps taken for further improvement (paper reference AQS-2017-005)

- (ii) A report providing members with the proposed AQSC Action plan for continuous improvements for 2017/18 and the completed AQSC action plan for 2016/17 (paper reference AQS-2017-009).

Academic Assurance report

- (b) It was reported that external examiners' reports across our University provided a positive endorsement of the security of academic standards. Reports received in 2017/18 as at 02 October 2017, relating to taught undergraduate provision undertaken partly or fully in 2016/17 academic year, indicated affirmative judgements for academic standards of 100% (508 reports). External Examiners for taught course postgraduate provision received in 2016/17 and by 02 October 2017 indicated a 100 % satisfaction for academic standards (233 reports). Two negative reports, 0.43 % of the total of 508 undergraduate reports received, related to specific concerns: the first related to the conduct of processes associated with the BSc (Hons) Building Surveying (BSBHK) provision delivered by a collaborative partner (Hong Kong College of Technology); and the second related to Student Achievement associated with the Diploma in Legal Practice (LEGAL) provision.
- (c) It was reported that as of 05 October 2017, our University had accreditation or recognition relationships in current good standing with 67 PSRBs which covered 232 courses providing further evidence of the quality and standing of our provision. It was also confirmed that all awards which were subject to in-country approval to enable operational delivery at overseas collaborative partners during 2016/17 received the requisite government approval.
- (d) It was confirmed that the course monitoring, annual review and enhancement process for 2017/18 had been undertaken in line with the University's academic cycle. To date 11 out of 13 Deans had submitted their annual review reports and 2 others were under development from the School of Art, Architecture and Design, and the School of Social Sciences, and an additional report from the new Department of Languages was also due to be received. As part of this monitoring, annual review and enhancement cycle the University's process for enhanced monitoring was also being implemented from 2017/18, prioritising courses that merited further review and support informed by course outcomes.

AQSC Action Plan

- (e) It was confirmed that the AQSC action plan for continuous improvements in 2016/17 had been completed with good progress made for all actions. The Committee was provided with a summary of this progress and was satisfied that good progress had been made.

- (f) An overview of the AQSC Action plan for continuous improvements for 2017/18 was provided and it included: continued work relating to the implementation of our university's Education Strategy and improvements in Key Performance Indicators; the implementation of the Enhanced Monitoring process that would be introduced in 2017/18; and a number of actions focusing on continued improvements in student satisfaction, retention, progression, and employability in line with our University's strategic planning framework and Education Strategy.

010.2017.AQS

- (a) It was **noted** that course that merited further review and support had been identified via a set of ten indicators made up of the institutional KPIs and NSS questions. Meetings would take place between the Course Directors and Quality Assurance Services (QAS) to identify the support that would be required to improve outcomes and also understand what may have already been implemented by the Course Teams. It was confirmed that the list of ten indicators used could be found on the University's management information hub.
- (b) It was noted that there had been evidence in the Deans reports that the issues related to differential attainment were being addressed, specifically those related to race and gender differentials although it was acknowledged that this was a complex issues to address with many different variable impacting on a students' attainment. It was also noted that very low numbers of certain student categories meant that analysing performance could be difficult at a local level and therefore collating data across the courses in the University would provide a clearer picture. It was also noted that there was evidence to suggest that students recruited via clearing also had an impact on attainment levels and that further analysis would be welcome concerning this student demographic.

011.2017.AQS

- (a) The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Academic Board that:
- (i) our university's quality assurance framework and processes were effective;
 - (ii) the University's periodic review processes fully involved students and included external peer or professional review;
 - (iii) the management of academic quality and standards for taught provision was sound;
 - (iv) our University was responding to any issues or concerns arising from the outcomes of our processes or from the analysis of associated data;
 - (v) the methodologies used as a basis to improve the student academic experience and outcomes were, to the best of the University' knowledge, robust and appropriate;
 - (vi) action plans were in place for the continuous improvement of the student academic experience and outcomes; and
 - (vii) that our University continued to meet the standards of Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines (2015).

(b) The Committee **AGREED** to approve the AQSC action plan for 2017/18 that accompanied the Academic Assurance report.

Validation and Re-Validation

012.2017.AQS (a) The Committee was presented with a report that provided the forthcoming validation and revalidation activity taking place in the next cycle up to November 2017 along with confirmation of the institutional partner approval activity taking place for collaborative partners during 2017-18 academic year. The Committee was also provided with the final outcomes from validation activity concluded in the 2016-17 academic year which had not been reported at the last meeting of AQSC (paper reference AQS-2017-006).

(b) It was reported that the current cycle of validation and revalidation activity would end on 30 November 2017. It was confirmed that a small number of outcomes had already been reported where courses were validated outright or where conditions had been met.

(c) The next validation and revalidation schedule running from December 2017 to November 2018 was currently in development taking account of School input to the cluster model. The final schedule would be presented to the next meeting of Academic Quality and Standards Committee in January 2018. The draft schedule currently indicated there would be circa 50 events in the cycle up to November 2018 although this figure was expected to increase as a number of new course developments had been moved into the next cycle of activity.

013.2017.AQS It was **noted** that the course related conditions for Rushmore Business School had been met, however, there were also partner level conditions concerning wi-fi access and seating arrangements at their Rodrigues location which had not been met. Further discussion would be taking place with Rushmore Business School concerning these issues and it was expected that they could be resolved in the next six months.

014.2017.AQS

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve:

(a) An extension to the condition deadline of six months for provision developed in partnership with Rushmore Business School.

(b) An extension to the period of partner approval from five to six years for partners in exit strategy.

Academic Audit

015.2017.AQS The Committee received a report summarising the process and findings of the 2016/17 academic audit activities and the proposed audit areas for 2017/18 (paper reference AQS-2017-007).

It was reported that the audit activities had included a desk-based survey of Chairs and Secretaries of Mitigation Panels and a desk-based survey of a selection of Module Leaders (two per school) involved in examination processes, looking at feedback provided following examinations.

016.2017.AQS

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed audit areas for 2017/18 along with the following recommendations concerning the audit on examinations feedback:

- (a) That further actions were taken to increase awareness amongst students of the feedback mechanisms in place for examinations.
- (b) That Schools review their feedback timescales for examinations to provide more consistent approaches across modules.
- (c) That the outcomes of this audit on feedback be considered in the planned annual review of regulations/processes for 2017/18 which will focus on assessment, feedback and use of technology.

Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body Update

017.2017.AQS

(a) The Committee was presented with a report which provided an update on on-campus and collaborative provision professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) activity (paper reference AQS-2017-008).

(b) It was reported that QAS were liaising with newly appointed Academic Quality Support Officers in Schools to ensure that planned accreditation activities were added to the register on an on-going basis. This information would in turn inform the planning of validation activity. Confirmation was also being sought that arrangements were in place to extend accreditations which were due to expire in 2018/19, so applicants and students were not disadvantaged.

018.2017.AQS

It was **noted** that courses would be removed from the institutional register if accreditation periods expired and would be re-entered upon receipt of documentation confirming re-accreditation.

019.2017.AQS

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the proposals which formalised a requirement for a copy of all accreditation/ recognition reports received in Schools from PSRBs to be submitted to Quality Assurance Services upon receipt, to strengthen assurance and to allow relevant good practice endorsed by PSRBs to be shared beyond the School.

Student Surveys Report 2016/17

020.2017.AQS

(a) The report provided an overview of the National Student Survey (NSS), the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey, International Student Barometer/Student Barometer and the Destination of Leavers in Higher Education survey for 2016/17 (paper reference AQS-2017-010).

- (b) It was reported that responses have been encouraging with good outcomes in all surveys. It was confirmed that work to improve student satisfaction for the areas which fall below our average performance would be a key feature of our Education Strategy over the period of our University Strategic Plan.

Module Evaluation Report – Semester 2 Outcomes 2016/17

- 021.2017.AQS (a) The report outlined Semester 2 and Semester 3 (2016/17) outcomes in relation to collected survey data from the Evasys module evaluation (paper reference AQS-2017-011).
- (b) It was reported that progress had been made in terms of initiatives which had already been implemented and the Committee noted the ongoing work to enhance the institutional level approach to module evaluation, using the Evasys software tools. It was noted that a pilot of the proposed new approach to module evaluation would be rolled out during 2017/18.
- 022.2017.AQS It was **noted** that clear guidance would be needed for Schools concerning the pilot of the new approach to module evaluation including which areas would be involved and how the results of the pilot would be shared.
- 023.2017.AQS The Committee **AGREED** to approved the planned changes to the process for 2017/18 that it was hoped would strengthen in-year enhancement and feedback for students along with improving the quality of data collected from the surveys

Part C: Strategy, Policy & Process

Education Strategy Developments

- 024.2017.AQS The report provided the committee with an update on progress with implementation on the following areas: The Learning Pathway; DEAP Forum 2017/18; Bespoke learning pathway development; the Student Support Framework; and Regulatory and process Reform (paper reference AQS-2017-012).
- 025.2017.AQS The Committee discussed the section of the academic regulations related to the potential upgrading of borderline performance where it was confirmed that this regulation was related to the potential for students to upgrade degree classifications only and did not apply to students who may have failed who might wish to be upgraded to a pass.
- 026.2017.AQS The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the updated Framework for the Management of Placement Activity.

Policy for Academic Assurance & Enhancement

- 027.2017.AQS (a) The Committee received a proposal for a revised University Policy for the Academic Assurance and Enhancement of our University's Higher Education

provision along with a copy of the University's Academic Assurance and Enhancement Framework (paper reference AQS-2017-013).

(b) The Committee was informed that the Policy would provide a concise summary our University's approach which can be made publicly available alongside our present Academic Regulations and Academic Governance public information.

028.2017.AQS It was **noted** that there would be a need to understand and define the operational tasks that the School Academic Committees would need to undertake as part of the Academic Assurance & Enhancement Framework.

029.2017.AQS The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Academic Board approve the Policy for Academic Assurance & Enhancement and the University's Academic Assurance and Enhancement Framework

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Year 3 and Subject-Level Pilot

030.2017.AQS The briefing paper provided an update on the developments in the TEF Year 3 process and the introduction of a TEF Subject level pilot in 2017/18 (paper reference AQS-2017-014).

031.2017.AQS It was **AGREED** that further updates would be emailed to the Committee concerning this process as they were received.

Pearson Institutional Review Report

032.2017.AQS (a) The Committee received the Annual Institutional Review Report of Pearson Licensed Centre Higher National Qualifications (paper reference AQS-2017-015).

(b) The 2016/17 report related to all licenced Higher National programmes run as institutional awards under the licence agreement during the 2016/17 academic year.

033.2017.AQS The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the report for submission to Pearson.

External Examiner Appointments

034.2017.AQS (a) This report provided the Committee with oversight of the appointment of External Examiners for the coming academic year 2017-18 (paper reference AQS-2017-016).

(b) It was reported that only one proposal had been rejected and this was for an extension of a current examiner and it was confirmed that the course team still had time to propose an alternative examiner for 2017-18.

- (c) It was confirmed that from 2017-18 all nominations for the appointment of External Examiners would be proposed by the Dean of School and submitted to Quality Assurance Services for institutional consideration and where appropriate, recommendation for approval by AQSC on behalf of Academic Board.

035.2017.AQS The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the table of appointments as set out in the report.

Exceptions to admissions criteria

036.2017.AQS The Committee received a report providing a summary of proposals for exceptions to the University's standard University Admissions Criteria that had been received and approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) since the last meeting of the Committee held on 05 June 2017 (paper reference AQS-2017-017).

Part D: Annual Reports

Annual Report on Academic Misconduct

037.2017.AQS (a) The report provided a summary of the number of admitted or found cases of students seeking unfair advantage, which were formally dealt with during the 2016-17 academic session. The report covered both on-site and collaborative provision (paper reference AQS-2017-018).

Secretary's note: Minutes 037.2017.AQS(b) to (e) are confidential subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 20

038.2017.AQS It was **noted** that further analysis could be undertaken of the data to determine whether students had been repeat offenders in the same semester or across the same level of study. It was observed that this data would be useful as it would indicate whether students were not learning from their first offences.

Annual Report on External Examining 2016/17

039.2017.AQS (a) The report provided assurance and oversight on the annual reports submitted by undergraduate external examiners and advisers during the 2016/17 academic year, including details of the receipt of Examiners' reports and School responses. The report also included an overview of external examiner feedback on undergraduate provision for both on-campus and collaborative provision (paper reference AQS-2017-019).

- (b) It was reported that external examiners had provided positive confirmation of standards set, student achievement and conduct of processes in their reports and that the University can be confident that the standards of our awards is assured.

040.2017.AQS The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendations that:

- (a) The Regulations review group review feedback received in respect of our approach to condonement and compensation;
- (b) Where areas of good or innovative practice have been commended these were collated and shared.

Part E: Reports from Committees/Groups

School Academic Committee Reports

- 041.2017.AQS Members noted the School Academic Committee Summary Reports (paper reference AQSC-2016-030).
- (a) School of Art, Architecture and Design – 16 March 2017
 - (b) School of Built Environment and Engineering – 13 March 2017
 - (c) School of Computing, Creative Technologies and Engineering – 15 March 2017
 - (d) School of Cultural Studies and Humanities – 14 March 2017
 - (e) School of Film, Music and Performing Arts – 15 March 2017
 - (f) School of Education – 08 March 2017
 - (g) School of Education – 05 April 2017
 - (h) School of Events, Tourism, Hospitality and Languages – 15 March 2017
 - (i) School of Sport – 05 April 2017
 - (j) Leeds Business School – 21 February 2017
 - (k) Leeds Business School – 24 April 2017
 - (l) Leeds Law School – 15 February 2017
 - (m) School of Clinical and Applied Sciences – 04 May 2017
 - (n) School of Health & Community Studies – 02 May 2017
 - (o) School of Social Sciences – 04 May 2017

Part F: Other Business

Schedule of meetings and business for 2015/16

042.2017.AQS The Committee received its schedule of meetings and business for 2016/17 (paper reference AQS-2017-034).

Date of next meeting

043.2017.AQS The next meeting of the Committee would be held at: 2pm on Monday 15 January 2018, Room G07, Broadcasting Place, City Campus.

Other business

044.2017.AQS No other business was raised.

Confirmed by the Committee/Board as a correct record and signed by the Chair:

Signed: _____ Date: _____