

MINUTES of the 11 June 2018 meeting

Present:

Professor Phil Cardew (Chair)

Jeff Abrams

Glenn Bowdin

Professor John Craig

Jack Harrison

Professor Ruth Pickford

Alan Smith

Melissa Askew

Barbara Colledge

Jim Durrant

Priscilla Preston

Joanna Smith

Jo Norry

Dr Caroline Bligh

Professor Andrew Cooper

Lesley Earle

Caroline Thomas

Ian Truelove

In attendance:

Kirsty Curwen

Sue Smith

Lee Jones

Charlie Hind (observing as SU VP Education Elect)

Rachel Bradford (Secretary)

Apologies:

Dr James Milligan

Sarah Roe

Part A: Preliminary Items

Declaration of interest

107.2017.AQS No declarations of interest were made.

Minutes

108.2017.AQS The Committee **AGREED** that the minutes of its meeting held on 19 March 2018 were an accurate record (paper reference AQS-2017-091).

Matters arising

109.2017.AQS The Chair presented a report on the matters arising (paper reference AQS-2017-092) and it was noted that

- (a) *Arising from minute 096(c).2017.AQS*: The UET had considered and endorsed the Collaborations Strategy which would be presented to the Academic Board for approval on 4 July 2018.
- (b) *Arising from minute 099.2017.AQS*: The external examiner appointment was ratified.

- (c) *Arising from minute 103.2017.AQS*: A new minuting style had been adopted by the Carnegie School of Education which ensured confidential information was redacted.

Report from the Students' Union

- 110.2017.AQS The Committee received a verbal report from the SU Vice President (Education) providing an update on the recent work undertaken by the SU and the following points were noted:
- (a) The SU President had been continuing with their work on increasing the use of Lecture Capture and a Guidance Pack had been created for Academics.
 - (b) The Vice President Equality & Diversity had been working on embedding the BAME ambassador network. It was noted that BAME ambassadors would report into School Academic Committees.
 - (c) The Vice President Education had been working on getting module information made available to students before they started their courses. The University Assessment Policy had also been considered and methods of the provision of feedback. It was noted that this work had shown that students had a preference for formative rather than summative feedback.
 - (d) The Golden Robes Awards took place on 31 May 2018 had been a huge success. The Director of Libraries, Learning and Innovation (LLI) advised that LLI would be holding a local event to celebrate colleagues that had been nominated for an award and added that they would very much like students to come to the event too. The Director of LLI also pointed out that it was important for communications relating to the Golden Robes Awards mentioned that Professional Services staff as well as Academics were involved.
 - (e) Student Representatives would be encouraged to receive face-to-face training about the role and those who could not attend for whatever reason would have the option to receive training online. The University Registrar queried at what point Student Representatives would be deemed as not engaging with the role and also queried whether it would be possible for a booklet to be issued to Student Representatives on appointment so they have some guidance at the outset of taking up the appointment. SU Vice President (Education) suggested that it would be worthwhile the University Registrar having a discussion with the SU Head of Membership and Engagement and the Student Voice Manager about issuing booklets to the Student Representatives.

Chair's Report

- 111.2017.AQS The Committee received a verbal report from the Chair and the following points were **noted**:
- (a) The University's application for registration with the Office for Students (OfS) had been submitted on 23 May 2018 and the only feedback received so far was confirmation of receipt of the application. It was expected that the outcome of the application would be communicated in September 2018.

- (b) Feedback from the Subject TEF had been received and it had been largely in line with expectations. It was noted that using the subject based model there was scope for a subject could be downgraded using the metrics. A general criticism of the model had been that individual subjects got lost in bigger subject groups. It was reported that once metrics were in place, they were very hard to change. The Chair recommended that there were two things the University needed to focus on for the next TEF submission were:
- (1) Improving metrics; and
 - (2) considering what activities are undertaken by the University now that would be good to use as evidence in the next TEF submission in 2020.

Part B: Quality & Student Matters

Academic Assurance

- 112.2017.AQS The Committee received a report from the University Registrar providing the latest iteration of the University's Academic Assurance report (paper reference AQS-2017-093).
- 113.2017.AQS It was **noted** that this was the fourth report this academic year 2017/18 and looked at the most recent evidence and outcomes for academic assurance relating to academic standards and quality for:
- (a) Postgraduate Course Annual Review Outcomes;
 - (b) Student Non-Continuation HESA Performance Indicator 2016/17;
 - (c) Module Evaluation Report for Semester 2; and
 - (d) Portfolio development and PSRB outcomes.
- 114.2017.AQS It was **noted** that in relation to Postgraduate Course Annual Review Outcomes, the Deans of all Schools, via the Annual Review Summary Reports had confirmed that:
- (a) relevant course action plans were in place to support continuous improvement of the student academic experience and student outcomes; and
 - (b) all examiner reports received had been responded to, and appropriate standards of awards were being set and maintained.

Through the annual reporting, Schools had requested that AQSC be made aware that:

- (c) the lack of free text boxes on Module Evaluation questionnaires was considered to hamper the student feedback;
- (d) the Campus M experience had been considered to be unsuccessful and had impacted negatively on students experience. Further discussions were being had regarding the monitoring of student attendance and alternative models were being investigated.
- (e) Some Schools had expressed uncertainty about how courses that had previously been sponsored by bursaries would be funded.

- 116.2017.AQS The Committee **noted** the TEF 2017/18 Continuation Indicators and it was recognised that further improvements to continuation rates continued to be a strategic objective of the University.
- 117.2017.AQS Following due consideration and discussion of the contents of the report, the Committee **ENDORSED** the report and could confirm to the Academic Board that it was satisfied that:
- a) the evidence contained in the report continued to provide affirmation of academic assurance that academic standards and quality are being maintained;
 - b) that action was underway in support of further improvements; and
 - c) that the evidence in the report continued to affirm that the University continued to align with the expectations under the Annual Provider Review process namely that:
 - i. the 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. the University was responding to any issues or concerns arising from the outcomes of its 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 our knowledge, robust and appropriate; and
 - vi. action plans were in place for the continuous improvement of the student academic experience and outcomes.
 - vii. that the University continued to meet the standards of Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines (2015) and continued to be aligned with the ongoing requirements of the UK sector and specific quality expectations, including the FHEQ and the UK Quality Code.

AQSC Action Plan

- 118.2017.AQS The Committee received a report from the University Registrar providing an update on progress in completing the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) Action plan for continuous improvements for 2017/18 (paper reference AQS-2017-094).
- 119.2017.AQS It was **reported** that all actions on the action plan had been completed.

- 120.2017.AQS It was **noted** that the UK Quality Code for Higher Education had been revised in March 2018 and that the QAA was working on associated guidance due to be published later in the year.
- 121.2017.AQS It was **reported** that work in 2018/19 would continue to focus on further improving student continuation and attainment as part of the Access and Participation Plan and Education Strategy. It was **noted** that the reliability of detail around continuation rates was questionable in some respects as it did not include students who progressed or changed courses.
- 122.2017.AQS Following due consideration and discussion of the contents of the report, the Committee **ENDORSED** the report and the completed status of the AQSC action plan 2017/18 for reporting to the Academic Board and to the Board of Governors.

Module Evaluation Report 2017/18

- 123.2017.AQS The Committee received a report from the Associate Director of Collaborative Provision noting the 2017/18 outcomes in relation to collected survey data from the Evasys module evaluation and progress with initiatives that had been implemented and proposing further activities to strengthen the capture of and response to student feedback (paper reference: AQS-2017-095).
- 124.2017.AQS It was **noted** that response rates had declined and that Schools had reported that the lack of qualitative comments had caused a number of issues. It was further **noted** that qualitative comments could still be sought from students but students would need to provide context and comments would need to be redacted which would be the responsibility of Schools.
- 125.2017.AQS It was **reported** that fewer collaborative partners had engaged with the module evaluation system than anticipated. It was proposed that this would be addressed through use of video conferencing in the 2018/19 academic year to increase understanding and engagement with the student data sharing requirements of the process.
- 126.2017.AQS It was **noted** that engagement with the Engagement Portal had doubled and it was being used by at least 50% of all University Module Leaders.
- 127.2017.AQS It was **reported** that there were plans to make the Insight Dashboard more widely available to colleagues in Schools in 2018/19. It was also planned that there would be one questionnaire per semester in 2018/19 and the module outcomes would be evaluated against NSS outcomes. This would allow for a timely assessment of whether any modules were contributing to courses declining in popularity. Snapshot periods to pull data would be identified and the data would be shared with Deans and Heads of Subject and Course Directors. The Committee was supportive of the proposed approach and agreed that it should be reviewed again in a year to check whether the quality of data had improved as a consequence.

Part C: Strategy, Policy, Regulations & Process

Education Strategy Developments

- 128.2017.AQS The Committee received a report on Education Strategy Developments (paper reference AQS-2017-096).
- 129.2017.AQS It was **reported** that continuation and satisfaction were key areas of focus for the Centre for Learning and Teaching. It was **noted** that DEAP For a continued to be successful with staff from across the Schools contributing to meaningful discussions around student satisfaction.
- 130.2017.AQS It was **noted** that with the Skills for Learning Team now incorporated as part of the Library Academic Support Team, the Academic Skills Tutors would be working with Academic Librarians to update the programme of 'drop-in' workshops for the 2018/19 academic year.
- 131.2017.AQS It was **noted** that the Student Support Framework had made good progress throughout 2017/18. Academic Advisers had developed a portfolio of work and Course Directors were able to advise them of what support they needed.
- 132.2017.AQS In terms of student engagement and attendance, it was **reported** that there had not been the level of engagement hoped for with SEMs and it had been agreed that a more reliable system of monitoring was required and in 2018/19 it was likely that a mix of paper and online methods to monitor. It was agreed that student engagement was a vital element but one that was difficult to track. The expectations of the OfS and the Student Protection Plan should provide guidance in terms of expectations of the regulator and inform the University's approach.

Development of Academic Regulations

- 133.2017.AQS The Committee received a report on the development of Academic Regulations which provided an update on recent amendments and proposals for changes to academic regulations and policy for 2018/19 implementation and planned development work in 2018/19 (paper reference: AQS-2017-097).
- 134.2017.AQS (a) It was **noted** that proposed changes to the Academic Regulations that had been endorsed by the Regulations Review Group included:
- i. Minor clarifications to existing wording and the correction of typographical errors.
 - ii. Clarifications relating to the current process regarding academic integrity.
 - iii. Amendments to the current Academic Regulations for mitigation for disabled students.

(b) The proposed amendments, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report were considered and discussed. After due consideration, the Committee

ENDORSED the proposals for regulatory change recommended in the report.

- (c) It was **reported** that further development work for 2018/19 would include the development of an Assessment and Feedback Policy, consideration of further use of electronic assessment and feedback and good practice dissemination.

Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body Activity

- 135.2017.AQS The Committee received a report providing a biannual update on course accreditation relationships with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) (paper reference: AQS-2017-098).
- 136.2017.AQS It was **reported** that the Register was shared with other stakeholders including Registry Services for the purpose of Key Information Set recording, Deans of School and Academic Quality Support Officers, where information relates to the expiration of accreditation, the Marketing and Recruitment Service in order to support the provision of accurate information to applicants and Student Services.
- 137.2017.AQS Accreditation periods that were due to expire during the current academic year or during 2019/20 were **noted** by the Committee and it was **reported** that conversations were taking place with Schools that were affected by this. Where accreditations were going to be removed the prospectus information for 2018/19 would be double checked to ensure that no Student Protection Plan or Competition and Markets Authority issues arose.
The Committee recognised the importance of ensuring accreditations did not expire as this would incur a financial penalty for the University.
- 138.2017.AQS The University Registrar took an action to send the Register to Deans of Schools and to ensure that they were clear about what accreditations were due for renewal soon and get assurance that renewals were in hand.

External Examiner Appointments

- 139.2017.AQS The Committee received a report providing oversight of the appointment of External Examiners for the coming academic year (paper reference: AQS-2017-099).
- 140.2017.AQS It was **noted** that the Home Office had revised its guidance for Employers on Right to Work checks and consequently the University was working to strengthen its approach and mitigate against the risk of civil penalty notices being imposed. External Examiners were now required to provide the University with original documents as specified in Home Office guidance which would be checked prior to any appointments being made.
- 141.2017.AQS The Committee **APPROVED** the table of appointments set out in Appendix A to the report. It was noted that 30 examiners needed to be replaced by 31 October 2018.

Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure

- 142.2017.AQS The Director of Student Services presented a report presenting a draft Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure (paper reference: AQS-2017-100).
- 143.2017.AQS It was **reported** that the purpose of the policy and procedure was to permit intervention in instances where students exhibit behaviours of concern. It was separate and distinct from Disciplinary policies and procedures and it addressed a procedural gap where a student's behaviour was a cause for concern.
- 144.2017.AQS It was **noted** that the intention was for the policy and procedure to be applied in a small number of instances and in a positive way. Support and guidance would be available for colleagues who needed to implement the policy and procedure.
- 145.2017.AQS There was discussion about whether 'Fit' was the correct terminology to use for the policy and it was concluded that the title of the policy was common sector parlance and therefore appropriate.
- 146.2017.AQS The Committee **RECOMMENDED** approval of the policy and procedure to the Academic Board.

Student Attendance Policy

- 147.2017.AQS The Committee received a report setting out proposed changes to the Student Attendance Policy (paper reference: AQS-2017-101).
- 148.2017.AQS It was **noted** that the proposed revisions to the policy included putting the onus on Schools to take action in the first instance where there were concerns around student attendance by reporting them to the Dean of School and putting the student on an Individual Improvement Development Plan ('IIDP'). Only in cases where an IIDP had not had the desired effect of improving attendance would cases be referred to the Attendance Panel with a recommendation that the student be withdrawn from their course.
- 149.2017.AQS The Committee **APPROVED** the proposed changes to the Policy and **RECOMMENDED** them to the Academic Board for adoption.

Exemptions from Academic Principles and Regulations

- 150.2017.AQS The Committee received a report providing a summary of the exemptions from the Academic Principles and Regulations received since the meeting of the Committee held on 05 June 2017 (paper reference: AQS-2017-102).
- 151.2017.AQS It was **reported** that there had been 27 requests for exemptions received between 06 June 2017 and 22 May 2018 which had been set out in Appendix A to the paper to provide the Committee with assurance that the requests were being dealt with appropriately. The Committee **noted** the report.

Part D: Reports from Committees/Groups

School Academic Committee Reports

- 152.2017.AQS The Committee received the following School Academic Committee Summary Reports:
- (a) Leeds Business School (paper reference AQS-2017-103).
 - (b) School of Art, Architecture and Design (paper reference AQS-2017-104).
 - (c) School of Built Environment and Engineering (paper reference AQS-2017-105).
 - (d) School of Clinical and Applied Sciences (paper reference AQS-2017-106).
 - (e) School of Computing, Creative Technologies and Engineering (paper reference AQS-2017-107).
 - (f) School of Cultural Studies and Humanities (paper reference AQS-2017-108).
 - (g) Carnegie School of Education (paper reference AQS-2017-109).
 - (h) School of Events Tourism & Hospitality Management (paper reference AQS-2017-110).
 - (i) School of Film, Music and Performing Arts (paper reference AQS-2017-111).
 - (j) School of Health and Community Studies (paper reference AQS-2017-112).
 - (k) School of Social Sciences (paper reference AQS-2017-113).
 - (l) Carnegie School of Sport (paper reference AQS-2017-114).
- 153.2017.AQS It was **noted** that some thought needed to be given to how the School Academic Committee Summary reports were presented as some of them were not picking up all of the detail of what the Committee needed to see in order to maintain oversight of the University's academic quality assurance framework in Schools concerning academic quality, standards and the enhancement of taught provision. It was suggested that it might be helpful to request that Schools sign a declaration confirming that they have reported all relevant matters to the Committee for it to discharge its obligations under its Terms of Reference.
- 154.2017.AQS It was **noted** that Governance and Legal Services were undertaking a review of the effectiveness of School Academic Committees and that they could include as part of their review, a check that the School Academic Committee minutes included the assurances required by the Committee.

Part E: Other Business

Academic Quality & Standards Committee schedule of meetings & draft schedule of business 2018/19

- 155.2017.AQS The Committee received its schedule of meetings for the academic year 2018/19 and a draft schedule of business 2018/19 (paper reference AQS.2017.115).

Date of next meeting

156.2017.AQS The next meeting of the Academic Quality & Standards Committee would be held at 2pm on the 15 October 2018 in room G07, Old Broadcasting House, City Campus.

Other business

157.2017.AQS No other business was raised.

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

Signed: _____ Date: _____