

Academic Quality and Standards Committee 16 January 2017

Summary of Proceedings

The nineteenth meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee was held at 1400 on 16 January 2017. Papers for the meeting are available on Academic Quality and Standards Committee webpage: <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/partners/Academic-Quality-Standards-Committee%20.htm>. The Academic Quality and Standards Committee's proceedings are summarized below. Full minutes will be published on the website once they have been approved by the Committee at its next meeting on 13 March 2016

First Degree Classifications

- a) The Committee was presented with an overview of first degree attainment for our University between 2013-14 and 2015-16. This did not include collaborative provision students. The number of graduating students in 2015-16 was 4440. The number of good honours (1st and 2:1) awarded in 2015-16 was 2807, this represents 63.2% of the graduating population. A range of student characteristics have been provided at University level, where available, for 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 including for the first time information on Polar 3 quintiles. An interactive table is available at School level for the same data set on the University's Management Information Hub. Further analysis of the data is recommended at School level to identify where it would be helpful to drill the data down to course level.

Student Complaints and Academic Appeals

- b) The Committee was presented with an annual report on cases received, investigated and resolved under our university's Student Complaints and Academic Appeals procedures in 2015/16. 33 Early Resolution Stage complaints were received, the single largest category with 10 complaints was academic status. None of the 33 cases were referred to the formal stage. 52 Formal complaints were received in 2015/16 which is two less than the previous year. Three of these were resolved informally. 49 complaints were dealt with at the formal stage. 44 complaints were handled to conclusion with 50% being upheld in full or part. 14 Appeal Stage complaints were received in 2015/16. Five were partially upheld and two were upheld in full. In 2015/16, the average time taken to resolve formal stage complaints was 33 days. This is a good improvement on 2014/15 when the average number of working days was 39. The team continue to work towards the service standard of 20 days.
- c) A total of 206 academic appeals were submitted in 2015/16 as at 16 November 2016. This represents 0.88% of the University's total student population and is a slight decrease on the 210 received in 2014/15. Previously Undisclosed Extenuating Circumstances (127) was the most common ground for appeal. Of the 206 appeal requests received, 59.2% (122) were rejected at the adjudication stage as having no grounds for appeal. 7 requests were withdrawn by students. 94% of eligible cases (61 out of 65) were resolved informally in 2015/16 as at 09 December 2016. 3.8% (8) resulted in a formal appeal hearing. The average time taken to complete the adjudication stage was 19 working days which is within the Service standard of 20 days. In 2016, 16 complaints were sent to the Office of the independent adjudicator which represents a decrease of 58% on the previous year.

AQSC Action Plan

- d) The report provided the Committee with the largely complete 2015/16 action plan. The oversight of continuing action is addressed through the respective system and other strategies. In October AQSC identified a small number of priorities for action in 2016/17 emerging from the academic assurance report these were added to our AQSC rolling action plan.

Developing Student Representation and the Student Voice

- e) This report provided the Committee an overview of developments in support of student representation and the promotion of 'the student voice. A co-ordinated joint consultation process was completed in December 2016 for staff (by QAS) and students (undertaken by the Students' Union) to seek views on a proposal for an early election process for Course representation. Firm proposals will be brought back to the March committee. The University is working in partnership with the SU in engagement with HEFCE's TSEP Pilot (The Student Engagement Pilot) which seeks to test and evaluate methods for capturing the student voice within the APR process.

2015/16 Annual Institutional Review Report of Pearson Licensed Centre Higher National Qualifications

- f) The Committee were presented with a report on a small number of HND programmes delivered by Leeds Beckett University within the requirements of the Pearson "Licence Agreement for Higher Education Institutions offering Higher Nationals under Licence from Pearson (Revised July 2016). All external examiners have confirmed that the standards set are appropriate for the level of the qualifications. Our University has now ceased recruitment to all HND courses, it is anticipated that the final students should have finished their programmes of study by July 2017, providing there are no deferrals or repeats.

Annual Report on Post graduate Taught External Examining

- g) The Committee were presented with a report which provided information on the annual reports submitted by Postgraduate external examiners and advisers during the 2015/16 academic year. All externals assigned to postgraduate on-campus courses and collaborative provision confirmed that standards set are appropriate in light of UK national expectations and PSRB requirements where relevant.

Report on External Examiner Appointments

- h) This report provided the Committee with oversight of the appointment of External Examiners for the coming academic year (2016-17). A total of 34 appointments were approved.

Education Strategy Developments

- i) The report provided the committee with an update on progress with implementation on the following areas:
- **The Learning Pathway.** This included an update on the upcoming DEAP Conference and confirmation a number of new/updated resources are available on the CLT website.
 - **Student Support Framework.** This included an update on the Review of Support for Academic Structures this academic year which will enable a focus on School Administration which will include staff from schools and professional services and will play a large part in determining some key roles within The Framework.
 - **Process Reform / Academic Regulations – Drafting Style and Content** – Colleagues endorsed the proposals for changes to 2016/17 regulations and agreed it should be taken forward to Academic Board in February.
 - **Development of Mid-Cycle Review and Subject review process.** – Colleagues approved the mid Cycle review process.

Exceptions to Admissions Criteria

- j) The Committee approved all proposals for Exceptions to our standard University Admissions Criteria that had been submitted with the exception of those noted below which requested changes to tariffs so will be considered through a review group led by Tracey Lancaster and Chris Watts.
- BA (Hons) Working with Young People and Families
 - BEng (Hons) Building Service Engineering
 - BSc (Hons) Computer Forensics and Security
 - BSc (Hons) Computer Forensics
 - BA (Hons) Architecture

English Language proficiency for Collaborative Provision

- k) The report provided the Committee with an update on English Language requirements for in-country delivery of Leeds Beckett Awards. It was noted that there could be lower requirements for in-country provision (as long as this presents no threat to the standards of an award delivered in English). A transition to a more School-based and risk-averse approach will be overseen by established internal mechanisms that can mitigate the risk of a collaborative provision student using our degree as a route to a Visa and placing our Tier 4 license at risk.

Exemptions from Academic Principles and Regulations

- l) The Committee noted 17 exemptions had been approved between 1st September 2016 and 5th December 2016.

Teaching Excellence Framework

- m) The Committee were provided with the latest draft submission to read. The Committee were asked to feedback on the submission particularly on areas that were seen as strengths in order to facilitate the final draft for submission. The deadline for the final submission is noon on 26th January 2017.

Kay Hartley (Administrative Team Leader)
Quality Assurance Services
January 2017