

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 18 October 2006 at the Coleraine campus

PRESENT

Professor D A McAlister (Chair), Professor R R Barnett (Vice-Chancellor), Professor N D Black, Miss C Cochrane, Dr T Cook, Mrs H Farley, Mr P Fleming, Dr P Hanna, Professor D Hunter, Professor R Hutchinson, Dr D A Heenan, Ms P Kane, Professor E M Lillie, Mr D McGivern, Mr T McLernon, Ms L McMaw, Dr R J Millar, Professor A Moran, Professor C W Mulholland, Ms N O'Hagan

APOLOGIES

Professor J M Allen, Professor B M Hannigan, Mr L McCurry, Professor R A Welch

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs C G Avery, Dr C Carter (for min 06.236), Mr A G Faulkner, Ms C Guyer (for min 06.235), Dr P McGowan (for min 06.240)

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

06.196 MINUTES

The Committee noted that in minute 06.127 'fourth bullet' should read 'third bullet'. Subject to this amendment, the confirmed minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2006 were signed by the Chair.

06.197 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

The Committee noted its terms of reference and membership. Dr T Cook, the new Faculty of Life and Health Sciences representative, Ms L McMaw, Student Representation and Development Co-ordinator in the Students' Union, Ms P Kane, Students' Union and Miss C Cochrane, Head of Staff Development, were welcomed to their first meeting of the Committee.

It was noted that Professor J Gillespie would be joining the Committee as the new Chair of the Sub-Committee on Continuing Professional Development for Academic Staff. New terms of reference and membership for the Sub-Committee would be considered at the December meeting of the Committee.

MATTERS ARISING

06.198 BSc Hons Applied Biosciences (DL) (Min 06.132)

Mr Fleming advised that the start date of the course had been deferred to September 2007. The role of alumni in student recruitment in Hong Kong had yet to be confirmed. The arrangements for e-tutors would follow the University's normal expectations.

06.199 Foundation Degrees (Min 06.137)

Professor Black reported that he had written to DEL regarding the possibility of an arrangement for an identified level of service from the Sector Skills Councils (SSC) provided free of charge. DEL had advised that, although the development of foundation degrees was not at present an SSC funded core activity, there was an expectation that some funding would be made available in the future.

06.200 GCSE and Essential Skills Equivalence (Min 06.141)

Professor Black reported that Dr Barnhill had advised that it was not intended that the proposed Standing Group on Entrance Qualifications would challenge nationally agreed equivalences. Instead, it would be a forum to make detailed academic judgements which would work strictly within the broad equivalences determined by UCAS. ADSSC would be considering a paper including the Standing Group's proposed terms of reference and membership at its next meeting.

06.201 SEND0: Agreements with Partner Institutions (Min 06.145)

The Committee noted that Governance Services had been consulted regarding appropriate wording in Agreements to reflect compliance with SEND0 and other legislation, taking account of implications for overseas partners.

It was noted that all institutions had a duty to comply with legislation, regardless of whether statutory requirements were mentioned by name and that NI institutions would have their own arrangements to ensure a pro-active response to SEND0. Consequently the institutional-level Memorandum of Recognition had been amended to provide a general statement to require a partner institution to 'have due regard in its policies and procedures to good practice in respect of equality of opportunity, anti-discrimination measures and health and safety'.

Revisions had also been made to outcentre agreements which applied where University students were taught off-campus to add the clause which referred to the University's specific policies:

"The [college] shall have due regard to:

- (a) the University's equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination policies; and
- (b) any anti-discrimination or health and safety statutory provisions in force from time to time in Northern Ireland; and
- (c) Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 as if it were a public authority within the meaning of the Act."

06.202 Achieving Effective Student Representation (Min 06.151)

At the June meeting the Committee had endorsed proposals for achieving effective student representation. It had noted that key competences and skills

achieved in the role of student representation could be recorded through PDP and had supported the development of a form of accreditation.

The Chair reported that Professor Allen had written advising that the University and SU Forum had noted that the preferred option of students was to obtain accreditation of training from the University rather than achieving it through the Open College Network.

The Committee identified the short course accreditation process for provision outside the award-bearing course framework, as a means of achieving accreditation. As these arrangements operated at Faculty rather than University-level, it was thought that the Faculty of Social Sciences might be best placed to assess the generic skills and competences being developed.

Ms McMaw reported that she was anxious to commence training of representatives, but only 80 representatives had been identified to her by Course/Subject Directors. Support was, therefore, sought from Faculties to ensure a full return. Not all the responses had provided the necessary information relating to student numbers and email addresses and Ms McMaw requested that consideration be given to providing her with access to student email addresses.

It was agreed that, for future years, the Deans should be copied into requests. The Chair reported that Ms C Guyer had been asked to re-issue University guidance on student representation to staff and reaffirmed the University's commitment to support the embedding of student representation arrangements.

AGREED:

- i) that Faculties encourage Course/Subject Directors to provide Ms McMaw with details of class representatives and that Professor Black consider the possibility of providing Ms McMaw with access to student email addresses, taking into consideration data protection requirements;
- ii) that the Faculty of Social Sciences be asked to consider the possible accreditation of the key competencies and skills achieved in the role of student representative;
- iii) that ADSS be asked to consider in due course how academic credit earned through training for the role of student representative might be recorded in PDP and/or the student transcript.

06.203 Attendance Monitoring (Min 06.175)

Professor Black reported that a paper explaining further the technical solutions to the support of attendance monitoring would be considered by ADSSC at its next meeting.

06.204 Postgraduate Certificate in Further and Higher Education (Min 06.180)

The Chair reported that, although the Postgraduate Certificate in Further and Higher Education had recently been revalidated and undergone radical change,

the Faculty of Social Sciences needed to submit a formal and detailed response clarifying how each of the issues raised in the Sub-Group's report had been addressed. This would be received by the Committee at its December meeting.

06.205 English Language Requirements for Admission (Mins 06.183 and 06.185 i))

The Committee, at its June meeting, had expressed concern regarding the English Language requirements agreed with SAAD College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences, Saudi Arabia and had agreed that this be referred to ADSSC for a review of current English Language entry requirements with a view to ensuring a clear and consistent approach. The Committee noted that the International Office was undertaking a review for report to the October meeting of ADSSC.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

06.206 QAA Institutional Audit 2009/10

The Chair reported that the University had indicated to the QAA a preference for the next institutional audit to be scheduled in Semester 2 of the 2009/10 academic year.

06.207 QAA Collaborative Provision Audit

The Chair reported that the QAA Briefing visit was currently underway, at the end of which the University would be advised of the groups of staff with whom the audit team wish to meet when they conducted the main audit visit (27 November - 1 December 2006), as well as supplementary documentation.

It was noted that visits to partner institutions would take place as follows:

8 November	North Down and Ards Institute of Further and Higher Education
9 November	HTMi (Virtual visit - Audit team based in Jordanstown)
14 November	Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education
15 November	Westcare Business Services

06.208 QAA Hong Kong Audit

The Chair reported that the QAA had advised that the University's link with Hong Kong College of Technology (HKCT) would be included in their 2006/07 country audit of Hong Kong. The Committee would receive the University's draft Commentary at its December meeting. The audit would consist of a visit to the University, probably in late February/early March 2007 and a further visit to HKCT in April/May 2007.

06.209 National Teaching Fellowship

Dr Heenan was congratulated on the National Teaching Fellowship awarded to her by the Higher Education Authority in June 2006.

06.210 Funding for HE Academy Subject Centre for Information and Computer Sciences

The Committee noted that the HEA had agreed to fund the University to host the above Subject Centre from 1 August 2005 to 31 July 2009 and that the University had been notified that £534,241 had been allocated for the period 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2007.

06.211 Student Placement for Entrepreneurship in Education (SPEED)

The Chair reported that the Faculty of Business and Management had been participating in a HEIF funded project in England and that a grant of £180,000 had been received to fund 30 placements of £6,000 each. It was planned to make these available across the University and a presentation would be given to the Committee at its December meeting. The Faculty was commended on its enterprise in the initiative.

06.212 Challenge and Change in the HE Learning Environment: Process and Practice (4 - 6 September 2006, Magee)

The Chair reported the Challenge and Change Conference had been a great success and that the feedback received had been highly positive. Particular thanks was expressed to Professor Hunter and Professor Lillie for their input. The Committee noted that a teaching and learning objective for 2006/7 would be to hold a conference on Strategies for Effective Student Retention as part of the final dissemination of the FDTL 4 STAR project.

The Committee supported a suggestion that a Visiting Professor(s) be appointed for the University, rather than associated with a particular faculty, would be a useful way of giving all Faculties the opportunity to benefit from expertise which would have generic relevance.

06.213 COURSE APPROVAL SUB-COMMITTEE (TLC/06/73)

The Chair presented the report of the meeting held on 21 September 2006 (TLC/06/73).

06.214 Course Approval (Item 1)

The Committee noted the withdrawals and revisions approved by Faculties (Appendix 1).

The Committee noted the following business in particular:

FA Three Dimensional Design and Heritage Crafts – Limavady College

The Chair reported that the Dean of Arts had now approved the proposed revised title of FdA Contemporary and Traditional Crafts.

Subject Unit 15G: BA Hons Hotel and Tourism Management at HTMi

The Committee noted the Revalidation Panel's recommendation of only one year's approval, in line with the period of approval of the University's BA course.

A revalidation event to consider the University's current final year leading to a BSc award would be undertaken this year.

FdSc Leisure Sport and Event Management at Omagh College

The Committee noted that this programme had been re-titled FdSc Event Management (Culture, Arts and Leisure).

BSc Hons Mathematics with Computing at South China Agricultural University

The Committee noted that an additional year's intake was proposed, pending new progress on arrangements with the Faculty.

Subject Unit 16E: Computing at HKCT

The Committee noted that the two courses at HKCT were expected to be withdrawn and would not undergo revalidation. [Secretary's note: CA5 forms now received.]

BSc Hons Nursing Studies (SAAD Outcentre, Saudi Arabia)

Mr Fleming reported that five members of staff had been appointed for the course to date and that the Head of School had participated in a number of telephone interviews and had reviewed CVs for all posts.

Revalidation Unit 9I: Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma Further and Higher Education

Although it had been recorded that an intake of 250 students was expected this year and that the Head of School had reported a need for additional hours to support this increase, Professor Moran informed the Committee that the actual intake had been lower (142 at Jordanstown and 55 at Magee) and that there was no longer a need for additional part-time hours.

AGREED that it be recommended to Senate:

- i) that the recommendations regarding course approval be endorsed as set out in Appendix 1;
- ii) that one year extensions to the period of approval be granted for the following programmes:

BSc Hons Mathematics with Computing at SCAU (2007 last intake)
Certificate/Diploma in Police Studies at PSNI (to include 2007 intake)

06.215 ADSS Business (Item 2)

The Committee noted that the Sub-Committee had received information on new proposals endorsed by the Academic Development and Student Services Committee in June 2006.

Proposed Advertising Programme at Magee

The Committee noted that Senate at its October meeting had asked that an innovative interdisciplinary approach to the subject be developed to ensure that the proposal was distinct from the BSc Hons Communication, Advertising and Marketing offered by the Faculty of Social Sciences at Jordanstown.

Postgraduate Certificate in Hydrogen Safety Engineering

The Committee noted that, subject to SMG approval of a business plan, the evaluation panel had recommended conditional approval for a January start. The Chair reminded Faculties of the need to pursue SMG approval in good time following consideration by Academic Planning Sub-Committee, ie prior to validation events being held.

06.216 Outstanding Final Documents

The Committee noted that there had been considerable improvement in the submission of final documents for 2005/6 events compared to previous years and that in most cases only minor revisions remained to be undertaken. Regular (normally monthly) reports were now provided to Faculties to assist in the monitoring of progress.

06.217 Review of Size of Revalidation Units

The Committee noted that Faculties had reviewed the size of revalidation units, particularly large and single course units, to ensure that revalidation panels would have a manageable load. Faculty proposals had been endorsed by the Sub-Committee, subject to a further review of Unit 15A: Hospitality, Leisure and Consumer Studies which was particularly large.

The Faculty of Arts had been asked to submit a case for an extension to the period of approval for provision which included the current International Affairs (14B) and American Studies (13D) units which were to be merged with History (4A).

Arising from the reorganisation of units, the Sub-Committee had endorsed requests for extensions to existing periods of approval.

AGREED that it be recommended to Senate that the following one-year extensions to periods of approval be approved:

30B1: Access Diplomas at East Antrim, Causeway and North East Institutes of Further and Higher Education – to include the 2010 intake;

30B3: Access Diplomas at Limavady College and North West Institute of Further and Higher Education – to include the 2010 intake;

9E: Education (Minor) - to include the 2009 intake.

06.218 SUB-COMMITTEE ON WORK-BASED LEARNING

Dr Millar presented the report of the meeting held on 27 September 2006 (TLC/06/74).

06.219 Database of Good Practice (Item 2)

The Committee noted that agreed examples of good practice would be included in the database.

06.220 Guidelines on Bullying and Harassment for Students on Placement

The Committee considered the Equality Unit's draft Guidelines on Bullying and Harassment for Students on Placement. The guidelines would be presented in a leaflet format, and a flowchart would be appended to illustrate the process.

The Committee discussed the definition of harassment (section 2) which stated that it would be important to note that 'it is the purpose or effect of the behaviour rather than the motive' which must be considered. It was acknowledged that even if no motive were present, behaviour could still be perceived as offensive. Clarification was needed in relation to the distinction intended between 'purpose' and 'motive' in the sentence. In this context, caution was also urged in the citing of 'touching' as an example of a form of behaviour constituting harassment.

The Committee considered that the responsibilities of students whilst on a work-based learning placement should be reviewed to include 'alleged' bullying or harassment. Some concern was expressed in relation to the expectation for students to support colleagues since this could put additional pressure on students not directly involved in the alleged bullying/harassment and it was considered that this should be reviewed.

The Committee considered that as the guidelines were aimed to assist students it would be helpful to include reference to the Students' Union as a further source of support.

The Committee noted that Staff Development had already been made aware of the need for associated guidelines for staff and that these were currently being developed together with an appropriate dissemination strategy.

AGREED:

- i) that the Guidelines be endorsed in principle, subject to review to take into account the Committee's comments;
- ii) that the Chair be authorised to approve the revised Guidelines (Appendix 2 - to follow) on behalf of the Committee.

06.221 HEIF 10 Project Guidelines for new Models of Placements (Item 4)

The Committee noted that work was under way to provide support for new models of placement in a number of identified pilot areas where previously there has been no placement.

06.222 Technologies for Placement Working Group (Item 5)

The Committee noted that the Online Placement University System (OPUS) would be made available to other institutions through an open source arrangement which would help the University gain recognition as a leader in the field of on-line placement management.

06.223 Placement Preparation Unit – WebCT Vista (Item 7a)

The Committee noted that Placement Tutors could now be registered on WebCT if they wished.

06.224 Health and Safety Guidelines (Item 7d)

The Committee noted that the Association of Sandwich Education and Training (ASET) guidance on Health and Safety had now been updated and would be forwarded to the University's Health and Safety Unit to enable it to update University guidelines. These would be considered further at a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.

AGREED: that, in reviewing the Guidelines, account be taken of SENDO requirements.

06.225 FACULTY HEADS OF COLLABORATIVE COURSES FORUM

Dr Hanna presented the report of the meeting held on 20 September 2006 (TLC/06/75).

06.226 Database for Collaborative Provision (Item 1)

The Committee noted that Appendix 1 of the paper set out the 18 data fields which members of the Forum considered should be held in the University's management information system in respect of each collaborative programme. Elements were currently maintained in diverse formats by a number of managerial units, each intended to serve the individual department's requirements. Professor Black confirmed that ADSS would need to consider the provision of the proposed data fields in the context of the new Student Records System and the data required for other aspects of collaborative activity, eg for transcripts.

06.227 Annual Report on Good Practice (Item 3)

The Committee noted that the annual report on good practice would be considered at the December meeting of the Committee.

06.228 Partner Institution Students and Staff (Item 5)

Dr Hanna reported that JISC had advised that the provision of Library access to students and staff of partner institutions would be at no extra cost as the additional numbers would not take the University into a higher price bracket.

06.229 Terms of Reference (Item 7)

The Committee noted that it was proposed that current terms 2 and 6 be merged to reflect the fact that the Forum reported to the Teaching and Learning Committee on the outcomes of each meeting. The Sub-Committee would no longer communicate with, or make reports to, other committees and bodies.

In relation to the new term 3 (previously term 2) it was proposed that 'planning' replace 'planned expansion'. This should be in the context of the University's collaborative strategy.

AGREED: that the revisions to the terms of reference be endorsed.

06.230 Online Discussion Forum (Item 12)

The Committee noted that the online discussion forum would be live within the next few weeks.

06.231 Feedback from Foundation Degree Conference (Item 19)

The Committee noted the report of the conference and in particular that DEL was undertaking a review of Foundation degrees. The University had been invited to nominate a representative to join DEL's Working Group. The timeframe for reporting was not yet known.

06.232 Staff Development for Course Directors (Item 20)

The Committee noted that between 50 and 60 delegates had attended the staff development event held on 11 October.

06.233 RIGHT OF APPEAL FROM STUDENTS OF PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

In April 2006, following the Themed Audit on Student Complaints and Appeals arrangements, the Committee had agreed that all partner institutions should, from 2006/7, for courses leading to University/Edexcel awards, adopt appeals procedures which followed the University's model (min 06.117 refers). Detailed guidance had subsequently been drawn up for partner institutions.

Senate at its June meeting had noted that, contrary to previous legal advice, this might not fully discharge the University's responsibilities to such students in terms of their right of appeal to the University.

The Committee considered the proposed terms of reference and membership of a working group to consider the right of appeal of students of partner institutions (TLC/06/76). It was noted that this was quite a complex matter deriving from the students' status, and the working group would need to take account of current rights of appeal within and beyond the partner institutions, the ground on which any appeal to the University might be permitted, whether this might exclude access to existing avenues of appeal, and whether, if access to the University was proposed, the appellant might then avail of subsequent appeal to the University Visitor.

AGREED: that the terms of reference and membership be endorsed subject to the inclusion of a new term 'to determine the current rights of appeal of students in partner institutions'.

06.234 ANNUAL SUBJECT MONITORING 2004/5 ADDITIONAL RESPONSES

The Committee received outstanding responses to the Annual Subject Monitoring Sub-Group's report (TLC/06/77) (min 06.179 refers).

Professor Black reported that in relation to recommendation 5, a report would be received by ADSSC at a future meeting regarding the proposals for a central Learning Support Unit offering literacy and numeracy support.

Recommendation 15 related to the inclusion by Faculties of a review of the outcomes of the Assessment of Teaching Student Questionnaire in the ASM process. The Chair reported that results of the Student Questionnaire were currently being analysed by Staff Development though it was understood that participation might have been significantly reduced on account of industrial action in Semester 2. An analysis by semester, by Faculty, was being undertaken.

06.235 REPORT ON OUTCOMES OF 2006 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

Ms C Guyer presented a report on the outcomes of the 2006 National Student Survey (TLC/06/78).

The Committee noted that in 2006, of the 254,000 students in 129 institutions surveyed, there had been a 57% response rate. At the University the response rate was 57% which was lower than the 64% return in 2005.

UU summary results were publicly available for 18 subject areas in 2006 (21 in 2005) on the TQI website. More detailed data including qualitative comments were also available through the NSS dissemination website (information from Ms Guyer).

The Committee noted the overall satisfaction score for a selected range of benchmark institutions as well as the highest and lowest scoring institutions. The University had achieved a score of 4.0 in 2006 which was the national average and was the same as the 2005 result. UU results by subject, when compared with subject averages from across all institutions, were very favourable. There was little significant change in the overall satisfaction scores of subjects taught at the University and the more detailed results by each section and each statement for both the 2005 and 2006 surveys.

The Committee noted that results grouped by revalidation subject (available through the NSS dissemination website) were not subject to the same reliability and had shown little change from 2005.

The majority of the positive qualitative comments provided by students related to the quality and content of courses and the supportive nature of staff. Facilities and resources were also highly rated. The most frequently made negative comments included the inability to access staff, staff unsupportive of their learning, cancellation of classes, staff unreliability, minimal or non-existent

feedback, bunching of submission dates for coursework, and spacing of examinations.

Concern was expressed that the University, with its vision of a reputation for excellence, appeared to be performing less well than it would have hoped in assessment, feedback and academic and other student support. These themes tended to recur in the University's own Student Questionnaire.

It was suggested that it would be useful to include for comparative purposes in table 4, which summarised results for the University overall, the national averages and, given the high overall satisfaction scores achieved by the Open University, scores for that University.

AGREED:

- i) that Ms Guyer be thanked for her report;
- ii) that table 4 be re-presented to include national averages and the results for the Open University;
- iii) that Faculties give consideration to their plans to address the findings of the survey through the ASM exercise;
- iv) that students be encouraged to participate in the survey to assist the University in identifying areas for attention.

06.236 FACULTY RETENTION MEETINGS

Dr C Carter presented a summary report of the meetings held with each of the Faculties in June 2006 to review the retention and progression of first year students (TLC/06/79).

The Committee noted that the discussions were based on the figures from the June examination boards rather than the supplementary boards. Overall, first year early leavers were down to 11.7% from 12.8% in 2004/5. However, failure was up to 3.6% from 3.0% in 2004/5 and progression to second year was down to 46.5% from 47.6%. This meant that the attrition rate was down to 15.3% from 15.8% in the previous year.

The Committee noted that the improved early leaving rates were almost entirely accounted for in the Faculty of Engineering. Failures had increased in Business and Management and Engineering. Progression rates had improved in Arts but declined in Life and Health Sciences.

The Committee noted the ongoing problems identified by Faculties and that a key issue was the importance of an effective Course Director. A number of examples of successful practice had been identified as well as ways in which the University could support the Faculties.

The Committee considered there to be sufficient evidence from internal and external initiatives that attendance monitoring at institutional level had a

substantial positive impact on retention and progression rates. The benefits of small group teaching were noted.

The Committee recognised that there would be major resource requirements to introduce universal attendance monitoring and reduce class sizes.

The Vice-Chancellor stated his support for investing in significant teaching and learning initiatives which would improve student retention and progression rates across the University.

AGREED:

- i) that the Vice-Chancellor's support be welcomed;
- ii) that specific proposals with costings be brought forward for consideration by the Committee.

06.237 THEMED AUDITS

The Committee noted paper TLC/06/80 which outlined progress on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the three audits completed in 2005/6 and proposals for future audits. The Committee noted the intention to postpone the student focus group element of the modular programmes audit to 2007/8. Although the full report would be delayed to June 2008 the findings from the statistical analysis would be reported.

The Committee noted that two further areas proposed for audit were the operation of Faculty/School Boards and the arrangements for the approval, management, monitoring and reporting of stand-alone credit-bearing modules. As the former was likely to be considered as a consequence of recommendations of the Self-Effectiveness Review of Senate, it was proposed that this area should not be audited at this stage. It was proposed that the arrangements for credit-bearing modules be scheduled for audit in 2008/9.

AGREED: that the proposals be endorsed.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

06.238 Achievement of 2005/6 Objectives

The Committee, at its meeting in December 2005, had endorsed specific teaching and learning objectives for 2005/6 which were to be reported through the Teaching and Learning Committee or other committees/working groups as appropriate. Faculties could set other teaching and learning objectives in relation to their own priorities. Faculties had been asked to provide reports to an agreed template (mins 05.192-3 refer).

The Committee considered paper TLC/06/81 which included statements from lead responsible agents and Faculty reports.

The Committee noted that in relation to the University-level objectives, targets had largely been met although there had been some slippage in terms of

timescales for the publication of the next edition of the Assessment Handbook and progress on the new Staff Appraisal scheme.

The Chair emphasised the need for regular and rigorous reporting of progress through the relevant Committees in relation to a number of areas such as the embedding of e-learning in the teaching and learning pedagogy for land-based programmes; the effective development of e-learning programmes particularly in the context of extension of the range of programmes to include top-up degrees and the monitoring of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in eLearning.

Professor Mulholland reported that Faculties had made good progress to achieve the targets set for the embedding of e-learning in land-based programmes. A blended-learning action group had been set up to consider issues relating to top-up progression routes. The second meeting of the management committee for the Centre for Excellence was being arranged. The Committee was assured that progress on the achievement of targets would be reported to ADSSC.

Although the Faculty reports showed that much work was ongoing, the Chair considered that it was difficult to assess from some of the reports the extent to which targets were being achieved. There was a need for smarter targets to be set including reference to performance measures with more detailed reporting on their achievement.

The Committee noted that the new corporate and management metrics would be helpful to Faculties in reflecting on and reporting the achievement of teaching and learning objectives.

06.239 2006/7 Teaching and Learning Objectives

The Chair presented paper TLC/06/82 which set out specific objectives for the current year which had been drawn up in consultation with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development and Student Services).

The Committee noted that the overarching goals as set out in Section III of the University's Teaching and Learning Strategy remained current and related to the ongoing activities of the University in the broad areas of teaching and learning. In setting the specific objectives for 2006/7 due consideration had been given to the core Strategic Aims 2, 3 and 4 as set out in the University's Corporate Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11.

A number of other objectives relating to ongoing business would also be included, ie the review of the Studies Advice System, the review of the University's position against revised sections of the QAA Code of Practice (Admissions, Assessment and Programme Approval), and the publication of the revised Assessment Handbook.

It was envisaged that consultation regarding the formulation of a new Teaching and Learning Strategy (2008/9 – 2011/12) would commence in Semester 2 of the current academic session with a view to seeking Senate's endorsement of the new Strategy by June 2008 for implementation from 2008/9.

The Committee noted that the target dates were those for reporting and not for completion of projects. Some work would be ongoing. Faculties would not be asked to add in their own teaching and learning objectives as the University objectives should be sufficiently embracing.

Professor McAlister highlighted the intention to establish a Working Group (to include DEL representation) to make recommendations for implementation from 2007/8 on how creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, might be further developed in the curriculum. Proposed terms of reference and membership of the Working Group would be received by the Committee at the December meeting.

AGREED:

- i) that any further suggestions for objectives should be forwarded to the Academic Office by the end of October for consideration by the Chair;
- ii) that subject to i) above it be recommended to Senate that the teaching and learning objectives for 2006/7 (Appendix 3) be endorsed;
- iii) that a summary progress report from lead agents/Faculties be considered by the Committee at its meeting in October 2007.

06.240 ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Dr P McGowan presented the annual report from NICENT for 2005/6 (TLC/06/83).

The Committee noted that in 2005/6 1665 undergraduate, 329 postgraduate taught and 200 postgraduate research students had participated in the Entrepreneurship Agenda within programmes across the Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) Faculties. Activity had also taken place with the Faculty of Social Sciences, which would be included in the final report.

Eighty-one courses (53 in Engineering, 21 in Life and Health Sciences, 7 in Arts) now embedded the core Entrepreneurship learning outcomes. Revised level 2 on-line modules had been launched together with a level M module in Entrepreneurship.

The Committee noted that agreement has been reached for funding arrangements for phase 2 of NICENT for the next three years. Performance targets for curriculum development activity had been set for the SET and non-SET Faculties in the University for the period.

The Chair reported that the Entrepreneurship Strategy fitted well with the agenda of embedding creativity and innovation in the curriculum identified in the Corporate Plan and in the Teaching and Learning Strategy. Entrepreneurship should be seen as a sub-set of creativity. It would also be important to ensure that this aligned with the employability agenda and that there was clarity and consistency in the use of language.

06.241 DRAFT RISK ASSESSMENT – SENDO

The Chair reported that consideration of paper TLC/06/84 'Draft Risk Assessment – SENDO' would be deferred to the December meeting of the Committee.

06.242 WORKING GROUP ON PLAGIARISM

Professor Lillie presented the final report of the Working Group (TLC/06/85).

The Committee, at its June meeting, had asked that the Working Group review matters raised by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and others with a view to presenting a revised framework. Further consideration was also to be given to resource requirements. Other recommendations, endorsed in June, had since been revisited in light of further discussions by the Group (min 06.168 refers).

Penalties (Items 2.1 and 2.2)

The Committee noted that the Framework of Penalties for Taught Programmes had been revised to toughen the penalties overall and to reduce the number of offences before a student was discontinued. The Penalties for Research Degree Students had introduced disciplinary consequences and had been endorsed by Research and Innovation Committee at its meeting on 17 October 2006. It was proposed that the frameworks should be adopted for an initial trial period of one year to allow any problems to be identified and reviewed.

The Committee noted that, in addition to the academic and disciplinary penalties which would apply under the Framework, some students might also be subject to the codes of ethics/behaviour of certain professions, and that the requirements of the Ordinance on Fitness for Practice might also apply. It was agreed that the preamble to the framework of penalties should mention that there may be such additional consequences.

The Committee noted that the maximum fine in 2006/7 should be £250 in line with the new Ordinance on Student Discipline. The wording would be revised so that an actual amount was not specified.

Application of Penalties (Item 2.3)

The Committee noted the recommendations that the Procedures for Dealing with Reports of Alleged Offences in Connection with Examinations and Other Forms of Assessment be revised to include a new section dealing with plagiarism which incorporate the framework of penalties and that the word 'wilfully' be removed from section 35 of Regulations Governing Examinations in Programmes of Study as below:

*It is an offence for a candidate **wilfully** to infringe, or attempt to infringe, the above regulations or to engage **wilfully**, or attempt to engage, in conduct for the purpose of gaining for himself or herself, or for another candidate, an unfair advantage with a view to obtaining a better result than he or she would otherwise achieve.*

Electronic Detection Software (Item 3)

The Committee had asked for further consultation on resource requirements for the renewal of the Turnitin software. It was noted that the Research Office had renewed the licence for 2006/7 at a cost of £10,678. The Committee was asked to endorse its continued use as a support tool and training for academic staff in its use.

Record System (Item 4)

The Working Group retained the view that records of offences should be kept on the new Student Records System as well as on paper files. The Committee noted that, as the new System would not now be available until 2008, it was recommended that Dr Scott be asked to report to ADSSC regarding costs and the format of recording in light of discussion during 2007/8 with a member of the Working Group.

Definition (Item 5)

The Committee noted that the definition of plagiarism had been further revised to include reference to self-plagiarism which was particularly relevant for research students. The Committee expressed some concern regarding possible confusion around previously submitted work and agreed that the definition should only relate to published work.

Student Declaration of Ownership on Coursework Cover Sheet (Item 6)

The Committee noted the proposed further amendment to the student declaration to include an acknowledgement that the student had read the University's policy on plagiarism and understand the definition given in the [course/subject] handbook.

Guidance to Students (Item 7)

The Committee noted the recommendation that generic guidance to students be given through the proposed study skills support unit (see min 06.234). This would not however be a substitute for the guidance that the subject/course provided. The Committee noted that Staff Development would consider the advice on bibliographies available on the Library website.

AGREED:

- i) that the Working Group, in particular Professor Lillie, and the Academic Office, be thanked for their work;
- ii) that it be recommended to Senate that the following be approved for implementation from 2006/7:
 - a) the definition of plagiarism to be included in handbooks as:

'Plagiarism is the act of taking or copying someone else's work, including another student's, and presenting it as if it were your own.

Typical plagiarists use ideas, texts, theories, data, created artistic artefacts or other material without acknowledgement so that the person considering this work is given the impression that what they have before them is the student's own original work when it is not. Plagiarism also occurs where a student's own previously published work is re-presented without being properly referenced. Plagiarism is a form of cheating and is dishonest.'

- b) the frameworks of penalties (taught and research), subject to a reference to the possibility of other consequences (Appendices 4a and b);
 - c) the revisions to the Procedures for Dealing with Reports of Alleged Offences in Connection with Examinations and Other Forms of Assessment (Appendix 4c);
 - d) the revision to the Regulations Governing Examinations in Programmes of Study at 2.3 above;
- iii) that the other recommendations relating to the recording system (item 4), the student declaration of ownership (item 6) and guidance to students (item 7) be endorsed;
- iv) that comprehensive advice on University policy and procedures for dealing with plagiarism be issued to appropriate staff;
- v) that the Working Group report to the Committee in Autumn 2007 regarding the operation of the policy and procedures in 2006/7.

06.243 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

The Committee, at its June meeting, had considered Faculty comments on proposed University guidelines on the treatment of extenuating circumstances which would contribute to consistent treatment of similar circumstances (min 06.167 refers). Mr C Crean was asked to bring forward a revised set of guidelines (TLC/06/86). The Committee noted that the revised guidelines could be tailored by Faculties to meet their own needs.

AGREED:

- i) that Mr Crean be thanked for his work in drawing up the Guidelines;
- ii) that the Guidelines (Appendix 5) be endorsed and be commended to Faculties and the Students' Union.

06.244 PROTOCOL IN RESPECT OF PROVISION FOR APPROVED ABSENCE AND INDEPENDENT STUDY PROGRAMMES FOR ELITE/HIGH PERFORMANCE STUDENT ATHLETES

Mr Fleming presented a proposed protocol in respect of elite/high performance student athletes who were unable to follow all scheduled classes (TLC/06/87).

The Committee noted that the protocol was restricted to elite athletes in line with the University's strategic objective to become the leading university for sport on the island of Ireland and consequently claims from other students for similar arrangements would not be accepted.

The Committee noted that the proposal aimed to enable such students to combine studies with their training/competition schedule through a new option of an 'approved absence and independent study programme' (ISP). Absence from more than 40% of scheduled classes would not be permitted. Currently students could only seek leave of absence or transfer to a 'slow track' mode of study.

The paper set out a step-by-step process for students to make a request and, following approval, implement the ISP with each module co-ordinator. Assignments would be submitted by the normal deadlines. The Committee noted that detailed guidelines would be drawn up for students. It was thought that the protocol would also benefit from a statement of responsibilities of staff.

The Committee noted that it would be useful to take this opportunity to amend attendance regulation 8 of the University's General Regulations for Students as absences may be approved in advance.

AGREED:

- i) that it be recommended to Senate that the University's General Regulations for Students be revised as follows:

'8 A student who has not been in attendance for more than three days through illness or other cause must notify immediately either the Programme/Subject Director or research supervisor.'

To be revised to:

'8 A student who has been absent without permission for more than three days through illness or other cause must notify immediately either the Course/Subject Director or the research supervisor.'

- ii) that the protocol be revised to clarify the responsibilities of module co-ordinators, course directors and advisers of studies;
- iii) that it be recommended to Senate that the protocol (Appendix 6) be endorsed as a pilot restricted to relevant students on courses in the School of Sports Studies for implementation from Semester 2 of the current academic year;
- iv) that, subject to Senate's endorsement of the protocol, the Faculty undertake a review of the operation of the pilot and report back to the October 2007 meeting of the Committee.

06.245 CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE OF THE HONOURS DEGREE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The Committee received a second consultation paper on the future of the Honours Degree Classification System from the Burgess Review Group (TLC/06/88). The Group considered the system to be no longer fit for purpose and proposed a simple Pass/Fail scheme, supplemented by detailed transcripts through the European Diploma Supplement.

It was noted that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development and Student Services) had circulated the consultation paper to Deans and PVCs for comment by 23 October 2006. A draft response would be presented to VCAG before the University response was submitted by the deadline of 3 November 2006.

The Committee noted that the Burgess Group has organised three conferences to discuss the proposals in September/October. Mr Faulkner reported that at the October meeting there was no evidence of unanimity in support of change. However, it did agree that the whole sector should change at the one time, if change had to be made.

There did not appear to be convincing evidence of the extent to which employers or students wanted such a radical development. Given that many institutions already issued transcripts/Diploma Supplements (including the University), employers could obtain this information if they wished.

The Committee noted that QAA reviews indicated that there was a move to greater uniformity within institutions where disparate classification rules had been identified. External Examiners confirmed general comparability of standards between institutions.

It was noted that Honours classification allowed institutions to rank students into summative categories according to their rules on assessment. It might not provide for exact comparability between students from different institutions (particularly at borderlines). It was noted that if English institutions were to finalise the adoption of a credit system with generic level descriptors (as in NI, Wales and Scotland), this would reinforce confidence in broad equivalence, particularly if generic assessment criteria were also adopted.

AGREED: that Mr Faulkner provide comments to Professor Black on behalf of the Committee.

06.246 PROPOSED DEPARTURE FROM '2 + 2' MODEL FOR FdSc SPORT, EXERCISE AND FITNESS

Mr Fleming presented a paper for the proposed departure from the standard '2 + 2' model for the FdSc Sport, Exercise and Fitness at North Down and Ards Institute of Further and Higher Education, Armagh College and Causeway Institute of Further and Higher Education (TLC/06/89).

The Committee noted that the Faculty wished to retain the '2 + 1' model for the programme (validated May 2004) which had derived from the former AB at NDAIFHE which had been designed to articulate to year 3 of the University

degree. Students undertook two 20 point bridging modules before progressing to the final year at the University.

Although the Faculty stated that the '2 + 2' model had not been firmly established at the time of validation, the norm of the '2 + 2' model for full-time Foundation degrees had been agreed by the Committee in May 2003 for implementation from 2003/4. The model of articulation was not highlighted or discussed by the Panel and the programme regulations indicated that students would be accepted to second year or only in exceptional circumstances, to the final year. In practice, this had not been the exception, but the norm.

The Faculty requested that this structure be confirmed as an exception and that the Foundation degree provision be reviewed in 2007/8 for the 2008 intake at the same time as the revalidation of the related UU Honours degrees. Currently the Foundation degree was scheduled for revalidation in 2008/9.

Although it was noted that students required a Commendation to be eligible for progression to the bridging modules, the Committee sought clarification of whether selection was based solely on academic performance and if the approach taken was in line with the published table of equivalences of offer standards for Foundation degrees linked to UCAS tariff points, which had been approved by Senate in 2005/6.

It was noted that an annual limit of 15 students had been set for progression to final year and that those students not taking the two bridging modules could apply for entry to year 2.

The Committee noted that DEL was undertaking a review of Foundation degrees which would include the '2 + 2' model.

Some concern was expressed by members that there was growing evidence that English institutions working in the context of a '2 + 1' model were offering Foundation degree students from NI the opportunity to enter the final year of degree programmes and were also now seeking to franchise level 3 study to Further Education Colleges in NI. This development would threaten the University's existing and proposed Foundation degree links with local Colleges.

AGREED:

- i) that, subject to the Faculty providing clarification of the selection arrangements, the proposed departure from the University's '2 + 2' model be approved up to the 2007/8 academic year;
- ii) the revalidation of the Foundation degrees at the three Colleges be brought forward by one year to 2007/8 and be considered at the same time as the revalidation of the Honours programmes at the University.

06.247 VALIDATED PROGRAMMES: 2006 ENTRY

The Committee received paper TLC/06/90: Schedule to Ordinance 1984/8: Institutions Recognised for the Purpose of Offering Approved Programmes of

Study Leading to University Awards and paper TLC/06/91: List of Centres Approved to Offer Awards of the Edexcel Foundation.

The Committee noted that in relation to paper TLC/06/90 the CertHEs in Amenity, Horticulture, Landscape Horticulture and Sports Turf Management should be replaced by a CertHE in Horticulture (with specialisms). HND in Civil Engineering at Upper Bann Institute of Further and Higher Education should read HND Computing.

PRIZES AND AWARDS

06.248 Annual Report 2005/6

The Committee received paper TLC/06/92, the annual report on prizes for 2005/6 and noted that 48 new prizes and awards had been introduced and 36 discontinued.

In relation to endowed prizes, the Committee noted that a review of arrangements had taken place and that staff from Development, Finance and Academic Office would meet annually. Where appropriate, recommendations in respect of discontinuation or non-award in a given year, in light of advice from Finance on income earned from investment, would be brought forward through Investment Committee and General Purposes and Finance Committee to Council. New and discontinued prizes would continue to be reported to the Teaching and Learning Committee.

Also, it was proposed that, subject to confirmation of the terms of reference of Development, Communications and Marketing Committee (DCMC), in future all new prizes be reported to DCMC after Senate approval. (Senate to date reported these directly to Council.)

AGREED: that the review and reporting arrangements be endorsed.

06.249 Proposals for New Prizes

The Committee received paper TLC/06/93 on seven new prizes (five in Engineering and two in Life and Health Sciences).

The Chair encouraged Faculties to give consideration to the possibility of seeking scholarships that might support students during their studies.

AGREED: that it be recommended to Senate that the seven new prizes be established (Appendix 7).

06.250 DEPARTURE FROM UNIVERSITY REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Mr Fleming presented a tabled paper (TLC/06/94) for a proposed departure from the University's regulatory framework in respect of the recently validated Postgraduate Diploma/MSc in Developing Practice in Healthcare at the Royal Group of Hospitals (outcentre). The Committee noted that the Faculty proposed to include a 50 point dissertation module for the MSc with a 10 point module on 'Writing a Research Proposal'. Although the University's norm was for a 60 point

dissertation module, the team proposed that students intending to undertake the MSc would undertake in January of the final year of the Postgraduate Diploma the 10 point module and then make a submission to the relevant body for ethical approval before commencing the dissertation. This would enable students to undertake an appropriate practice-based research project within an acceptable time limit. The Committee noted that the overall credit values of the Postgraduate Diploma and the MSc were 135 and 185 points respectively, not 180 and 190 as indicated in the paper.

AGREED: that the departure be endorsed.

Duration: 3 hours 55 minutes

31 October 2006

AGF/CA/lh

REPORT FROM THE COURSE APPROVAL SUB-COMMITTEE (21.9.06)

COURSE APPROVAL (Item 1)

The Sub-Committee considered business from each Faculty and noted revisions approved by the Faculties as detailed in the Annex.

FACULTY OF ARTS

CertHE Irish History and Cultural Traditions at Limavady College of Further and Higher Education

- NOTED:
- (a) that Limavady College now wished to retain this course. The course was revalidated in 2004/5 but revised documentation had not been submitted at the time;
 - (b) that the final documentation had now been submitted and approved by the Chair of the Revalidation Panel;
 - (c) that the course would not be offered in 2006 owing to staffing difficulties and that confirmation of resources would be required before the programme was offered.

AGREED: that the request be approved (for intakes 2007-2009), subject to confirmation by the Faculty that adequate resources are in place prior to the programme being offered.

FdA Three Dimensional Design and Heritage Crafts at Limavady College of Further and Higher Education

- NOTED:
- (a) that the new title agreed by the UU Head of School and the Director of Limavady College was FdA Contemporary and Traditional Crafts;
 - (b) that confirmation of the new title was awaited from the Dean on behalf of the Faculty.

AGREED: that the new title be approved, subject to confirmation from the Dean.

Course Withdrawals

NOTED: that the following courses had been withdrawn:

PgDip/MA Irish and Scottish Studies
PgDip/MA Written and Verbal Arts

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

Subject Unit 15G: BA Hons Hotel and Tourism Management at HTMi, School of International Hotel and Tourism Management, Switzerland

RECEIVED: the report of the Revalidation Panel.

- NOTED:
- (a) that steps were being taken to address staff development, library resourcing and quality management matters;
 - (b) that the final document had been received and that the conditions of the Panel had been met;
 - (c) that the external English language test requirement (condition iii) had been waived in 2006 as the specific CAE test could not be undertaken in the summer;
 - (c) that it was understood that HTMi would wish to offer level 3 of the BSc which replaced the BA at the University from 2004, and that this would be evaluated during 2006/07;
 - (d) that the programme had been selected for a 'virtual' visit as part of the forthcoming QAA Collaborative Audit.

RECOMMENDED: that the course be approved for a further period of one year (2006 intake) in line with the run-out of the course at the University.

PgD/MSc International Hotel and Tourism Management and PgD/MSc International Tourism Development

NOTED: that, in accordance with a recommendation of the Evaluation Panel, these programmes had now been restructured to MSc with PgDip exit award.

FdSc Leisure, Sport and Event Management at Omagh College

- NOTED:
- (a) that the revalidation panel, which met on 25 October 2005, had asked for a review of the content and, as a result, possible review of the title;
 - (b) that, pending approval of the final document, the programme had been re-titled FdSc Event Management (Culture, Arts and Leisure).

Course Withdrawals

NOTED: that the following courses had been withdrawn:

BSc (Hons) Retail, Marketing and Customer Service Management (Belfast Institute of Further and Higher Education)

HNC/D Business and Related Studies (CIS/CAS); HNC/D Business and Finance; HNC/D Business and Marketing; HNC/D Public Administration; HNC/D Retail Management; HNC/D Retail and Customer Services Management (Armagh College, East Antrim Institute of Further and Higher Education, East Down Institute of Further and Higher Education, Fermanagh College, Limavady College, North East Institute of Further and Higher Education, Omagh College, Newry and Killeel Institute of Further and Higher Education)

HNC/D Business with Marketing (North East Institute of Further and Higher Education)

HNC/D Business with Finance (North East Institute of Further and Higher Education)

HNC/D Business Studies (North Down and Ards Institute of Further and Higher Education)

HNC/D Business with Computing (Fermanagh College, North Down and Ards Institute of Further and Higher Education)

HNC/D Retail Management (Causeway Institute of Further and Higher Education, Lisburn Institute of Further and Higher Education)

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING

Revalidation Subject Unit 4B: Built Environment (Colleges)

RECEIVED: the report of the Revalidation Panel for the revalidation of FdSc Architectural Technology and FdSc Construction Engineering.

- NOTED:
- (a) that eight colleges had collaborated on curriculum planning and development of the two foundation degrees;
 - (b) that the FdSc Architectural Technology (PT) would not be offered in 2006/07 at Armagh College and that the Faculty would confirm that there were adequate staffing resources before the 2007 intake;
 - (d) that NWIFHE would not offer either degree this year and that the Faculty would make recommendations to the Sub-Committee regarding the 2007 intake;
 - (e) that DEL had approved the provision with the exception of FdSc Architectural Technology at NEIFHE;

- (f) that the final document had now been forwarded to the Chair of the Revalidation Panel for approval as the conditions and recommendations had been addressed;
- (g) that the Chair had asked to meet with NEIFHE Senior Management to discuss institutional matters arising from Annual Course Review.

- AGREED:
- (i) that a number of the Panel's recommendations should have been set as conditions of approval as they related to issues of standards assurance and that Chairs of Evaluation/Revalidation Panels be reminded that standards matters must be treated as conditions and not recommendations;
 - (ii) that the FHCC be asked to provide a report for the meeting of CASC on 11 January 2007, outlining how the Panel's conditions and recommendations have been addressed in practice.

RECOMMENDED: that, subject to reports from the Faculty in respect of NKIFHE (regarding the FdSc Architectural Technology programme only) and NWIFHE prior to first intakes, the following provision be approved for both full-time and part-time modes for a further period of five years (intakes 2006-2011), with the exception of Armagh College, which is approved for the FdSc Architectural Technology only in part-time mode.

The programmes and mode of attendance that the institutions intend to offer in 2006 together with the approved maximum cohort sizes are as follows:

<u>FdSc Architectural Technology</u>	<u>Maximum Cohort Size</u>
Armagh College of FHE (PT)	12
Belfast Institute of FHE (FT)	20
East Down Institute of FHE (FT)	12
North East Institute of FHE (FT)	10
Omagh College of FHE (PT)	15
Upper Bann Institute of FHE (FT)	12
North West Institute of FHE (no intake 2006)	10 (FT)
Newry & Kilkeel Institute of FHE (no intake 2006)	12 (FT)
<u>FdSc Construction Engineering</u>	<u>Maximum Cohort Size</u>
Belfast Institute of FHE (FT)	20
East Down Institute of FHE (FT)	15
Newry & Kilkeel Institute of FHE (FT)	12
Newry & Kilkeel Institute of FHE (PT)	12

North East Institute of FHE	(FT)	20
Omagh College of FHE	(PT)	24
Upper Bann Institute of FHE	(FT)	12
North West Institute of FHE	(no intake 2006)	10 (FT)

During the period of approval, any changes to the mode of attendance offered by the Institutions will require to be reported through the Faculty for approval of cohort size.

BSc Hons Computing Science

NOTED: that the Faculty had extended the provision of the Associate Bachelor's degree exit award to the BSc Hons Computing Science programme (with the award of AB Computing Studies) and that this had been omitted from the CA3 form noted at CASC on 30 May 2006.

BSc Hons Mathematics with Computing

NOTED: (a) that the Faculty had proposed a revision to the proposed date of withdrawal for the programme at South China Agricultural University (SCAU) from the end of the 2007/8 academic year to ensure continuity as SCAU was working towards new arrangements with the Faculty whereby the Faculty would admit students to the final year of a Computer Science degree at the University, following completion of a SCAU Higher Diploma;

(b) that consequently the Faculty had requested an extension of one year to the period of approval for the BSc Hons Mathematics with Computing programme at Jordanstown;

(c) that the Faculty had confirmed that the standards and quality at SCAU remained satisfactory but had made clear that there would be no further extension;

(d) that an action plan had been drawn up and that SCAU was keeping to schedule.

RECOMMENDED: that the period of approval of the courses at SCAU and UU be extended by one year (2007 intake at SCAU and final year intake at Jordanstown in 2009).

Subject Unit 16E: BSc Hons Computing and BSc Hons Interactive Multimedia Designs at Hong Kong College of Technology (HKCT)

NOTED: (a) that, at its meeting on 14 June 2006, the Teaching and Learning Committee had recommended a one year extension of approval to the two degrees, following the special visit of the two Pro-Vice-Chancellors to the institution with regard to matters raised in the Annual Course Review report;

- (b) that the Faculty had already received an extension to approval and postponement for the revalidation of its own provision in computing;
- (c) that discussions were ongoing between the Faculty and the University's Senior Management about the future strategic direction of the link with the college;
- (d) that HKCT had been selected to be part of the forthcoming QAA Audit of provision in Hong Kong.

Subject Unit 4A2: Built Environment (PG)

NOTED: that the following courses had not been submitted for revalidation and were now deemed to have been withdrawn:

PgC/D/MSc Project Management
 PgD/MSc Corporate Real Estate and Facilities Management
 PgD/MSc Environmental Health, Protection and Safety

Course Withdrawals

NOTED: that the following courses had been withdrawn:

Diploma in Foundation Studies in Computing/Access Diploma in Computing (with Cert exit award) at North East Institute of FHE
 FdSc Software Engineering at North East Institute of FHE
 FdSc Computing with eMedia (with CertHE exit award) at Limavady College of FHE
 HNC Building Engineering at Omagh College
 HND/C Building and Estate Management at Causeway Institute of Further and Higher Education
 HND Computing with CAS at Upper Bann Institute of Further and Higher Education (Portadown campus)

FACULTY OF LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

BSc Hons Nursing Studies (SAAD College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences (SCNAHS), Saudi Arabia - outcentre)

RECEIVED: the report of the Evaluation Panel.

- NOTED:
- (a) that this was a five year degree delivered through the University, using considerable e-learning as well as some face-to-face contact;
 - (b) that, while the curriculum had been developed by the University, most of the delivery and assessment would be carried out by SCNAHS staff who would be appointed Recognised Teachers of the University. Staff were to be appointed by September and the Faculty would be involved in the appointment process. Staff not meeting the University's teaching standards would be required to complete the PgCHET;

- (c) that, at its meeting on 14 June 2006, the Teaching and Learning Committee considered a number of proposed departures from normal University practice and that those relating to progress and meetings of Boards of Examiners were approved as they were the same as the exceptions previously approved for the BSc Hons course offered on campus;
- (d) that the Committee had expressed disquiet at the low English Language entry standard which had been part of the contract signed with SAAD prior to the evaluation meeting and that this issue was being considered by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development and Student Services) as it had wider implications;
- (e) that separate external examiners would be required for the English Language and Islamic Studies components unless the other externals had expertise;
- (f) that the Faculty had held discussions with SAAD regarding the expansion of the provision, as well as the provision of a pharmacy programme. The Sub-Committee expressed concern regarding this as there is currently no pharmacy programme offered by UU.

AGREED: that the Faculty be asked for a progress report in relation to the appointment of staff at the meeting of the Teaching and Learning Committee on 18 October 2006.

RECOMMENDED: that, subject to special consideration being given to the programme in the Annual Subject Monitoring exercise, the programme be approved for a period of five years (intakes February 2007-2011).

Revalidation of PgCert in Education for Nurses, Midwives and Specialist Community Public Health Nurses (Lecturer/Practice Education pathways)

- NOTED:
- (a) that, as the NMC has developed new standards, the Faculty had brought forward the revalidation of this course to 2006/7;
 - (b) that the title would be revised to PgCert in Education for Nurses, Midwives and Specialist Practice Public Health Nurses (lecturer pathway only);
 - (c) that the revalidation had been scheduled for March 2007, but the Faculty had requested a May event.

AGREED: that the revalidation event be held in early May and that the Faculty would be required to meet any conditions of approval and submit revised documentation by the end of June.

BSc Hons Biomedical Sciences with Diploma in Professional Practice

NOTED: that the Institute of Biomedical Science had confirmed accreditation for the 2005-2009 cohorts.

BSc Hons Applied Biosciences (DL)

- NOTED:
- (a) that, following the visit to the HKCT by the two Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the University was satisfied with the physical resources of HKCT to support certain aspects of the programme;
 - (b) that an Agreement had now been signed;
 - (c) that the course would now start in January 2007.

Course Withdrawals

NOTED: that the following courses had been withdrawn:

MSc Counselling Psychology (Magee)
PgDip Medical Science (Jordanstown)

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Revalidation Unit 9I: PgCert/Dip Further and Higher Education

RECEIVED: the report of the Revalidation Panel.

- NOTED:
- (a) that the revised programme would be delivered in 2006/07;
 - (b) that there would be an intake of 250 students this year and that the Head of School had requested 'additional hours' to support this increase;
 - (c) that a response to all of the Panel's conditions and recommendations had been forwarded to the Academic Office;
 - (d) that the Teaching and Learning Committee had received separately the Faculty's response to the ETI report on the PgCert and a supplementary report from the ASM Sub-Group and that the Faculty's response to the latter would be provided to the Teaching and Learning Committee at its meeting in December;
 - (e) that it was intended to invite the Inspectorate to an early meeting to discuss the provision prior to a follow-up inspection of the PgCert, which would probably take place in the second semester.

RECOMMENDED: that the programme be approved for a further period of five years (intakes 2006-2011).

Certificate/Diploma in Police Studies at PSNI

RECEIVED: a request from the Faculty for an extension of approval to include the 2007/8 intakes.

- NOTED:
- (a) that limited progress had been made by the Police College in setting a strategic direction for education and the possible development of a FdSc;
 - (b) that the University had concerns regarding the current provision's fitness for purpose but the report confirmed its quality and standard.

RECOMMENDED: that the period of approval be extended to include the 2007/8 intakes.

Access Diploma in Information Technology and Professional Development for Women

RECEIVED: a CA3 proposal to remove 'for Women' from the title in order to clarify that it was not a Women's Studies course.

RECOMMENDED: that the proposed change of title be approved, subject to confirmation also by the Academic Planning Sub-Committee.

Course Withdrawal

NOTED: that the following course had been withdrawn:

MSc Social Work (Magee)

REPORT ON ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT AND STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE BUSINESS (Item 2)

RECEIVED: a report of new proposals considered by the Academic Planning Sub-Committee on 1 June 2006 and endorsed by the Academic Development and Student Services Committee on 19 June 2006.

- NOTED:
- (a) that an optional intercalary year leading to the award of Diploma in Area Studies had been introduced for all full-time undergraduate Honours degrees (including Architecture programmes) in the School of Art and Design;
 - (b) that the Faculty of Social Sciences had expressed concern regarding the Faculty of Business and Management's proposed Advertising programme at Magee. This would be considered at the next meeting of the Academic Planning Sub-Committee on 26 September.
 - (c) that the title of the proposed Minor in Economic Environment at Magee had been amended to Economic Studies. Discussion

would also be expected between the Faculty of Business and Management and the Faculty of Social Sciences on this matter;

- (d) that the proposed Postgraduate Certificate in Hydrogen Safety Engineering (DL) was subject to SMG approval of the business plan;
- (e) that accreditation from the Law Society was being sought for the proposed PgDip in Legal Practice at Magee and that the relevant professional body may wish to be involved in the evaluation of the proposed Single Honours LLB, which would be part of the revalidation of Subject Unit 18A: Law in November 2006;
- (f) that Chair's action had been taken to recommend to Senate that planning and evaluation of an FdSc Computing (FT/PT) at Upper Bann Institute of Further and Higher Education proceed;
- (g) that the new proposals would be accommodated in the validation schedule for 2006/07.

COURSE APPROVAL SUB-COMMITTEE

21 September 2006

FACULTY OF ARTS

BA Hons International Politics

To add three optional modules in Sociology and to remove four modules; to move module POL519M1 to semester 2;

BA Hons Media Arts

To revise the teaching and assessment methods in MED515C2 and to introduce module MED306C1 in 2006/7 only; to replace module MED514C2A/B with MED513C1;

BA Hons Media Studies; Undergraduate Hons Subject: Media Studies

To reintroduce and revise module MED512C1, with a revised title, Radio/Sound Theory and Practices, into the Single Honours degree, and to withdraw module MED514C1A/B from all undergraduate Media Studies provision;

BA Hons Irish Language and Literature; BA Hons Irish Studies; Undergraduate Honours Subject: Irish

To revise and re-title module IRS103C1;

PgDip/MDes: Design and Communication

To re-title two modules and the Master's project module;

PgDip/MA Local History

To revise the assessment strategies for the modules undertaken by the one remaining student on the course in 2006/7 and to revise the mode of delivery from lecture/seminar format to tutor/supervision meetings and discussions;

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

BA Hons Hotel and Tourism Management at NKIFHE (outcentre)

To introduce an optional module on The Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions Industry at NKIFHE, in addition to current availability at Portrush and to revise the status of HTM508J1 to optional;

BSc Hons Human Resource Management

To replace LAW106J2 with two 10 point modules;

BSc Hons Consumer Studies; AB Consumer Studies

To revise the assessment weighting in module CST314P1 to 100% coursework; to introduce an additional optional Level 2 module Applied Food Product Design and Development;

Advanced Diploma: Management Practice (Sustainable Futures)

To introduce a new optional module;

PgDip/MSc Business Improvement

To introduce a new module 'Creating Value' for the current cohort;

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING

AB Computing

To replace module COM126C1 with COM125C1;

FACULTY OF LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Cert/PgCert in Independent and Supplementary Prescribing Course

To amend regulations to allow students who have been granted exemptions to be considered for the award, in line with the University regulations;

BSc Hons Psychology; BSc Hons Social Psychology

To offer optional module PSY523C2 in semester 1 rather than semester 2;

BSc Hons Nursing Sciences; PgDip/MSc Health and Social Care

To introduce new, more version of three Level 3 modules in Practice Development in the BSc and the generic version of the Level 3 Fundamentals of Practice Development module and two new Level M modules in the PgDip/MSc;

BSc/BSc Hons Nursing (Adult/Mental Health)

To amend progress regulations to introduce FdSc exit awards (following revalidation) and to meet the revision to NMC circular 37/2005 regarding requirement to fulfil CFP outcomes within 12 weeks of entering the branch programme;

BSc Hons Marine Science

To introduce a new compulsory Level 2 module in Physical Oceanography;

BSc Hons Geography (with DIS/DAS)

To change the semester of three modules, to change the semester of two modules and to withdraw two modules;

BSc Hons Environmental Science (with DIS/DAS)

To move module ENS304C1 to semester 2;

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Access Diploma in Information Technology & Professional Development for Women (JN, NWIFHE)

To merge four modules into two modules; to remove the work placement element, to revise the title and credit value of module AED024J2; to change the status of the two Mathematics modules to compulsory; to revise regulations;

Access Diploma in Social Sciences and Humanities at Causeway Institute of FHE

To introduce a new optional module in Qualitative Research Methods;

CertHE in Telematics and Management Studies

To withdraw FRE103J1 and to introduce a Foundation Mathematics module in its place; to revise and re-title two modules;

BSc Hons Social Work

To amend the assessment weighting in module SWK114M2 to 100% coursework;

LLM Human Rights Law (JN & ME)

To change the assessment strategy in module LAW821J1/M1;

PgCert/Dip/MSc in Higher Education Practice

To replace module 'Methodologies for Work-based Research' by a version of the module 'Research Methods in Education' which is offered on other postgraduate courses in the School;

PgDip Professional and Management Development

To replace module BMG728J1 with a new module Entrepreneurship.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT – GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS ON WORK-BASED LEARNING PLACEMENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of these guidelines is to assist and support any student who believes they may be being subjected to harassment or bullying whilst on a work-based learning placement. They aim to define harassment and bullying, to outline the rights and responsibilities of both students and the University in such circumstances, and to point students towards the appropriate sources of advice.

It is widely recognised that both bullying and harassment detract from a productive working and learning environment and can affect the health, integrity, confidence, morale and performance of those affected by it, including those who witness or know about such unwanted behaviour. This can have a direct impact on the motivation and attendance of staff and students, and consequently on the productivity and economic efficiency of the organisation. It therefore makes sense for employers to have a policy on Bullying and Harassment and to know how to respond to complaints.

Harassment in any form is unacceptable behaviour and should not be permitted or condoned by any employer. Sexual, sectarian and racial harassment and harassment on the grounds of disability or sexual orientation constitute discrimination and are unlawful under the sex discrimination, fair employment, race relations and disability and sexual orientation legislation. Harassment is also a criminal offence under the Protection from Harassment (NI) Order 1997 and it may contravene the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978. Moreover from October 2006 harassment on the grounds of age will also be unlawful.

2 DEFINITIONS

Harassment

Harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual/sectarian/racist nature or other conduct based on sex, sexual orientation, religious belief, political opinion, race/ethnic origin¹, marital or family status², which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of women and men or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment can also be unwanted conduct aimed at an individual's disability or based on an individual's age, social status or Trade Union membership. Harassment can include unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct. Such behaviour is unacceptable where it is unwanted, unreasonable and offensive to the recipient. It is also important to note that it is the purpose or effect of the behaviour which must be considered, even when there may have been no intention to subject someone to harassment.

¹ Race/Ethnic Origin also includes colour, nationality and national origin. The Irish Travellers are recognised as being a racial group.

² This includes both people with, and people without dependants.

Some examples are given below but many forms of behaviour can constitute harassment.

- Physical conduct ranging from inappropriate touching to serious assault;
 - Oral and written harassment through jokes, offensive language, racist remarks, gossip and slander, sectarian songs, threats, letters;
 - Visual displays such as of posters, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags, buntings or emblems or any offensive material, including electronically generated material;
 - Isolation or non-co-operation at work, exclusion from social activities or conversation;
 - Coercion, including pressure for sexual favours, pressure to participate in political/religious groups;
- Intrusion by pestering, spying, following etc.

Bullying

Bullying is unacceptable, offensive behaviour. It is often an abuse of power or position where the targets can experience difficulty in defending themselves. It can be defined as unfair treatment, excessive criticism, or persistent nit-picking, intimidating, aggressive or undermining behaviour, which makes the recipient(s), feel upset, humiliated, threatened or vulnerable and undermines their self-confidence and integrity. Some examples could include a combination of:

- Aggression, threats and shouting;
- Constant belittling, marginalising or ridiculing;
- Excessive criticism about minor things;
- Inappropriate removal of areas of responsibility, or deliberately impeding the work of another employee;
- Excessive monitoring of someone's work or inaccurate accusations about quality of work;
- Public humiliation;
- Taking credit for someone's work but never taking the blame if something goes wrong;
- Twisting things someone says or does;
- Withholding information from or deliberately supplying incorrect information to employees so they are less able to do their job;

- Setting impossible objectives or constantly changing someone's work remit;
- Isolation or non-co-operation at work, exclusion from social activities or conversation;
- Spreading malicious rumours;
- Failure to deal with the issue of an individual consistently being given an excessive workload compared with colleagues;
- Preventing individuals from progressing, by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities.

Bullying can also be more subtle and insidious, and can gradually wear someone down. Often it takes place when there are no witnesses, and the victim is afraid to complain through fear of not being believed and of the bullying getting worse. Bullying has an extremely negative effect on the individual and ultimately on the organisation and can cause stress and anxiety which can lead to physical ill health and mental distress. The University will therefore investigate any complaints of bullying thoroughly.

3 YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES WHILST ON A WORK-BASED LEARNING PLACEMENT

As an employee at your work-based learning organisation, you have a responsibility to comply with the policies and procedures of that organisation. This includes the Policy on Bullying and/or Harassment, where one exists³. You also have a personal responsibility to help to ensure a working environment in which the dignity of employees is respected.

In the course of your induction in your work placement make sure you obtain a copy of all relevant policies, including a policy on bullying and harassment, if the organisation has one. It is recognised that smaller organisations may not have formal policies and procedures but this will not preclude you from making a complaint should you need to at a later stage.

You should discourage bullying and harassment by making it clear that you find such behaviour unacceptable and by supporting colleagues (including a fellow student) who suffer such treatment. Anyone being subjected to bullying or harassment, or who is aware of any such incidents (or alleged incidents) is encouraged to alert a manager, industrial supervisor to any incident of bullying or harassment to enable the organisation to deal with the matter.

As an employee you also have a responsibility towards your colleagues and if you witness an incident of bullying or harassment you may be required to give a statement and to be interviewed in the course of an investigation.

³ If the employer does not have a formal policy on bullying and/or harassment you should ascertain if there is a grievance procedure or other formal complaints procedure, Harassment is likely to be covered by legislation, whether or not a formal policy exists.

4 YOUR RIGHTS

Whether or not the organisation has a formal policy for dealing with such matters you have the right to work in an environment which is free from any form of bullying or harassment. You also have a right to raise a complaint should you feel you are being bullied and harassed, and to expect the organisation to deal with that complaint appropriately.

Ultimately you also have legal rights under the various pieces of legislation referred to in the Introduction.

5 THE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The University has a responsibility to you whilst you are a student. In the periods other than those covered by work placements, this responsibility is outlined by the University Policy on Bullying and Harassment, available at <http://www.equality.ulster.ac.uk/policies.html>. Whilst you are on a work placement the University continues to have a duty of care for you but as you are an employee of another organisation, internal university policies are not applicable. However university staff are still available to give you advice and assistance should you feel your are the victim of either harassment or bullying within your work placement organisation.

What to do if you feel you may be being harassed or bullied in your work placement

Firstly, you should be aware that you do not have to deal with the situation on your own. There are a number of sources of help.

6 UNIVERSITY HARASSMENT ADVISORS

University Harassment Advisors have been appointed to provide students (and staff) with advice and assistance. An advisor can be contacted on a confidential basis at any time. The names and locations of advisors can be obtained from the Equality Unit and from your Faculty/School office and are available at <http://www.equality.ulster.ac.uk/policies.html>.

7 ADVICE FROM ACADEMIC STAFF

Academic staff will deal with queries about bullying and harassment confidentially, unless and until you want them to involve a third party. Making a complaint or enquiring about the process for dealing with bullying or harassment will have no effect on your marks.

All academic staff are required to attend a basic equality awareness training/development. These guidelines are also being disseminated to all placement tutors and academic supervisors so that they will know how to respond to a request for advice from you. A member of university staff cannot resolve a complaint of bullying or harassment on your behalf because they would have no jurisdiction to do so in the organisation in which you are employed. However they will provide you with advice about the steps open to you. For example, they can assist you to find out if there are procedures in place in the organisation. They should signpost you to the right person

in the organisation who will know how such matters are dealt with. They also can accompany you to any meetings in connection with your complaint to offer you support. They can also give you details about university counselling services.

8 UNIVERSITY COUNSELLING

At any stage you can contact the University's counselling service. You can contact the service on any campus, and all year round. The service is free and confidential. Contact details are available at <http://www.studentsupport.ulster.ac.uk/counselling/contact.html>.

9 STUDENTS UNION

You may also wish to contact the Students' Union for advice and support. Both staff and officers have received training in the University's Bullying and Harassment Policy and can assist you in dealing with these issues. Contact details are available at <http://www.uusu.org/content/index.php?page=3563>.

A Final Note

Your placement year should be a valuable, fulfilling and enjoyable experience and in all likelihood yours will be just this. The majority of work-based placements are completed successfully without any issues arising in relation to harassment or bullying. However these guidelines have been drawn up to assist you, in the unlikely event that you find yourself in a position where you feel you may be subject to behaviour of this kind.

Bullying & Harassment Guidelines for Students on Work-Based Learning Placement

Do you believe you may be subjected to harassment or bullying whilst on your current work-based learning placement?

YES

Please access the: Bullying & Harassment Guidelines for Students on Work-based Learning Placement either via <http://www.equality-ulster.ac.uk/policies.html> or your Placement Tutor

(NB These Guidelines have been developed to assist and support any student who believes they may be subjected to harassment or bullying whilst on a work-based learning placement)

If you are unsure of any of the contents in the guidelines document please seek clarification from your Placement Tutor

University Counselling

You can, at any stage, contact the University confidential Counselling Service (available at all Campuses)

Jordanstown & Belfast:

Margaret Calvert
028 9036 6336

em.calvert@ulster.ac.uk

Coleraine:

Mary McTaggart
028 7032 4105

m.mctaggart@ulster.ac.uk

Sarah Conn

028 7032 4139

s.conn@ulster.ac.uk

Magee:

Hazel McEvoy
028 7137 5218

hf.mcevoy@ulster.ac.uk

Speak to your Placement Tutor/University Adviser/Equality Unit regarding an informal resolution

Do you wish to make a formal complaint?

YES

Check if your current work-based learning placement/organisation has a formal policy on bullying and/or harassment, grievance procedure or other formal complaints procedures and if so initiate a formal complaint in line with the organisations policy/procedures

NO

Ask your Placement Tutor for advice on how to make a formal complaint

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES 2006/07

	Objective	Responsibility	Report to	Target Date	Progress & further action planned
	ADMISSIONS and ACCESS				
(i)	<p>Faculties, as part of the academic planning process, are to demonstrate how they will attain their MASN and non-MASN target numbers for the period up to 2009/10 having due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in widening participation and outreach, and • Extending international and local collaboration • Promoting innovation and creativity 	Faculties/ Dr D O'Kane/ Ms J Reilly	ADSSC/TLC	June 2007	
(ii)	To progress implementation of the University's Access Agreement, including, inter alia, the promotion of bursaries and scholarships, the development of innovative outreach activities and further development of internal and external collaborative partnerships for the delivery of the Agreement.	PVC(ADSS)/ Faculties	ADSSC	March 2007	

	Objective	Responsibility	Report to	Target Date	Progress & further action planned
	PROGRAMMES of STUDY				
(i)	In line with DEL policy to progress the further roll-out of Foundation degrees and the smooth transfer of UU Intermediate level qualifications to the further and higher education sector	PVC (ADSS)/ Faculties	ADSSC	October 2007	
(ii)	To continue to give high priority to the effective development of e-learning programmes, in particular the extension of the range of programmes which include progression from foundation degrees and other intermediate level qualifications to University honours levels awards.	Professor Mulholland/ Faculties	ADSSC/TLC	October 2007	
(iii)	To ensure that the subject areas identified in the 2007 HPC accreditation visit lead to co-terminous awards.	LHS/ QMAU	TLC	May 2007	

	Objective	Responsibility	Report to	Target Date	Progress & further action planned
	TEACHING and LEARNING				
(i)	In line with the University's e-learning Strategy and agreed targets, priority will be given to the embedding of e-learning in the teaching and pedagogy for land-based programmes, supported as appropriate by Staff Development and the Institute for Lifelong Learning	Faculties/ Professor Mulholland/ Staff Development	TLC/ ADSSC	October 2007	
(ii)	The PDP programme: a) to roll out to all undergraduate students (full time & part time) as cohorts progress; b) to conduct pilots for postgraduate and research students in 2006/7.	Damien McGivern/ Faculties	ADSSC/ TLC	October 2007	
(iii)	To formulate a SENDO strategy and associated Code of Practice	Equality Unit/ Student Support/ Faculties	TLC/ Council/ Senate	Strategy (April 2007) COP (August 2007)	
(iv)	To enhance student and graduate employability in line with TQEF objectives and targets	Career Development Centre/ Faculties	TLC/ ADSSC	January 2008	
(v)	To develop and disseminate innovations and good practice in teaching and learning.	Faculties/ Staff Development/ FITLC	TLC	October 2007	

	Objective	Responsibility	Report to	Target Date	Progress & further action planned
(vi)	To monitor and report on Faculty compliance with the University's policy on Student Transition	Staff Development	TLC	June 2007	
(vii)	To host a conference on Strategies for Effective Student Retention as part of the final dissemination of the FDTL4 STAR project	Tony Cook/ Staff Development	TLC	April 2007	
(viii)	To establish a Working Group (to include DEL representation) to make recommendations for implementation with effect from 2007/08 on how creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship may be further developed within the curriculum	PVC (T&L)	TLC	June 2007	
(ix)	To update the Assessment Handbook	Academic Office	TLC	April 2007	
(x)	To complete the review of the Studies Advice System	Carol Curran	TLC	February 2007	

	Objective	Responsibility	Report to	Target Date	Progress & further action planned
	STANDARDS and QUALITY				
(i)	To undertake a thematic audit of the University's Modular System	QMAU	TLC	December 2007	
(ii)	To finalise and agree the recommendations from the Working Group on Plagiarism and subject to Senate's endorsement to implement the agreed recommendations during the academic session 2006/07	Faculties	TLC	October 2007	
(iii)	To pilot the Peer Review Scheme and in light of the pilot to facilitate the full roll-out of the scheme by faculties in the 2007/08 academic session	CPD Sc/ Staff Development/ Faculties	TLC	June 2007	
(iv)	To review the University's position against the revised Section 6 of the QAA Code of Practice: Assessment of Students	Academic Office	TLC	February 2007	
(v)	To review the University's position against the revised Section 7 of the QAA Code of Practice: Programme Design, Approval, Monitoring and Review	Academic Office	TLC	February 2007	
(vi)	To review the University's position against the revised Section 10 of the QAA Code of Practice: Admissions to Higher Education	PVC (ADSS)	ADSSC	February 2007	

	Objective	Responsibility	Report to	Target Date	Progress & further action planned
	RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES				
(i)	To monitor and review progress against the KPIs as set out in the University's Support Charters	QMAU	Senate/ Council	April 2007	

	Objective	Responsibility	Report to	Target Date	Progress & further action planned
	REWARD and RECOGNITION				
(i)	To disseminate and seek quality nominations for the University's Distinguished Teaching and Learning Support Staff Awards	Staff Development/ FITLS	TLC	December 2006	
(ii)	To disseminate and seek quality individual University nominations to the 2007 National Teaching Fellowship Scheme	Staff Development/ FITLS	TLC	June 2007	
(iii)	To undertake training and development in support of the new Developmental Appraisal Review (DAR) scheme to fully facilitate implementation of the scheme with effect from the 2007/08 session onwards	Staff Development/ Faculties	TLC/ Council	June 2007	
(iv)	To develop a CPD Code of Practice for academic and non-academic staff for implementation in the 2007/08 academic session onwards	Staff Development/ Faculties/ Departments	Senate/ Council	September 2007	

FRAMEWORK OF PENALTIES FOR PLAGIARISM OFFENCES IN TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

APPENDIX 4A

1 ST OFFENCE	2 ND OFFENCE	3 RD OFFENCE	4 TH OFFENCE	PLAGIARISM DETECTED SUBSEQUENT TO GRADUATION
<p>Reduction in marks based on exclusion of plagiarised work.</p> <p>Formative interview with module co-ordinator and/or tutor.</p> <p><u>Where 1st offence is in Master's Dissertation:</u></p> <p>Mark of zero. Re-submit. Interview with Head of School and/or Course Director and/or supervisor.</p>	<p>Mark of zero for assignment containing plagiarism.</p> <p>Interview with Head of School and/or Course/Subject Director and/or tutor.</p> <p>Formal letter placed on student file.</p>	<p>Mark of zero for assignment containing plagiarism and maximum mark of 40% (UG) or 50% (PG) for coursework element.</p> <p>Case referred to Dean with recommendation of reprimand and fine up to £150 (2006/07).</p> <p>Formal letter placed on student file.</p>	<p>Mark of zero for module.</p> <p>Case referred to University Disciplinary Committee with recommendation of suspension (1 semester or 1 year as advised by Faculty) or discontinue studies at the University.</p> <p>Outcome placed on student file.</p>	<p>The award may be revoked.</p>

NOTES:

- (a) After a student has received formative advice offences are cumulative and carry over from year to year. Offences are not carried over from undergraduate study to postgraduate study.
- (b) Mark of zero penalty not implemented until formative advice has been given to a student. It may therefore be appropriate, depending on the proximity of assignment deadlines, to count two or three occasions of plagiarism as one offence.
- (c) A student who does not attend for interview (1st offence) will be deemed to have received formative advice for the purpose of applying penalties.
- (d) When formative advice is given to a student, or an interview held, a note should be placed on the student's file. If the student does not attend for interview, this should also be noted on the student's file. Best practice recommends that more than one member of staff should be present when interviewing a student.
- (e) All offences should be recorded on the central plagiarism register through the Student Record System. (Use of the Student Record System to be confirmed on receipt of further information regarding storage and recording of such information. Until then, plagiarism records should be kept at Faculty/School/subject level.) This is simply to record the number of offences. It is not a penalty.
- (f) 'Assignment containing plagiarism' means the assignment which contains the plagiarised material, and not all the assessment for the module.
- (g) When, in the academic judgement of the member of staff, the plagiarism is of a very minor nature and may be attributed to incorrect referencing techniques, it may be penalised as such rather than as plagiarism.
- (h) When a student fails in assessment following the application of a penalty, the normal consequences of failure as set out in course/award regulations apply.
- (i) In addition to the academic and disciplinary penalties which apply under the Framework, some students might also be subject to the codes of ethics/behaviour of certain professions and the Ordinance on Fitness for Practice might also apply.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT (100 DAY VIVA)	CONFIRMATION ASSESSMENT	INTERIM SUBMITTED WORK (e.g.. PUBLISHED PAPERS OR THESIS CHAPTERS)	THESIS	PLAGIARISM DETECTED SUBSEQUENT TO GRADUATION
<p>Plagiarism will be dealt with by a verbal warning to the student, delivered by the Chairman of the examining panel at the oral examination.</p> <p>The student will also be asked to rewrite and, in exceptional circumstances, may be removed from the programme.</p>	<p>The student will be required to resubmit the report for further assessment. If the resubmitted material also contains plagiarised material, this will be assessed by the examining panel and the student will be deemed not to have progressed successfully.</p> <p>The student will then be interviewed by the Head of the Graduate School and may be removed from the programme.</p> <p>A record will be placed on the student file.</p>	<p>The student will be interviewed by the Head of the Graduate School.</p> <p>Such cases may be referred to Dean with recommendation of reprimand and a fine up to £150 (2006/07). In exceptional circumstances, the student may be referred to the University Disciplinary Committee with a recommendation to discontinue studies at the University.</p> <p>A record will be placed on the student file.</p>	<p>Examiners are asked to examine the thesis and to make an academic judgement on it, taking into account the nature and extent of the plagiarism. If the thesis is deemed worthy of the degree, it must be resubmitted with all plagiarised material eliminated.</p> <p>Depending on the extent and nature of plagiarised material in the thesis, the student may be deemed to have failed and referred to the University Disciplinary Committee with a recommendation to discontinue studies at the University.</p> <p>A record will be placed on the student file.</p>	<p>The award may be revoked.</p>

NOTES:

- (a) When, in the academic judgement of the member of staff, the plagiarism is of a very minor nature and may be attributed to incorrect referencing techniques, it may be treated as such rather than as plagiarism.

FORMS OF ASSESSMENT OTHER THAN WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS

Definition: For the purpose of these procedures forms of assessment other than written examinations shall be termed coursework and shall include practical work, essays, projects, dissertations, exercises, seminar papers, oral presentations, reports, class tests, artefacts, designs etc.

ALLEGED OFFENCES OTHER THAN PLAGIARISM

- 2.1 Where a tutor, supervisor or other member of staff suspects that a candidate has committed an offence such as copying from the work of another candidate ~~or~~, fabrication of results ~~or plagiarism~~ he or she shall submit a written report accompanied by any relevant supporting material and the candidate's coursework to the Course/Subject Director for the course on which the candidate is registered.
- 2.2 The Course/Subject Director may make such enquiries as may be considered necessary including interviewing the candidate. He or she shall consider the report in consultation with the member of staff responsible for the coursework and determine if there is a prima facie case that the candidate has engaged, or attempted to engage, in conduct for the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage. On the basis of this decision the Course/Subject Director shall determine in consultation with the Dean whether or not to instigate disciplinary proceedings.
- 2.3 If the Course/Subject Director decides not to instigate disciplinary proceedings he or she shall inform the candidate, the member of staff responsible for the coursework, and the Dean, accordingly. The member of staff shall determine what credit, if any, the candidate should receive for the coursework. The Course/Subject Director shall report the matter to the Course Committee and, in due course, to the Board of Examiners.
- 2.4 If the Course/Subject Director decides to instigate disciplinary proceedings he or she shall submit a written report to the Dean, who shall refer the matter to the Provost and inform the Director of Corporate Planning and Governance ~~Planning and Governance Services~~ and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).
- 2.5 The Provost shall interview the candidate in accordance with Ordinance 2006/1.
- 2.6 If the Provost is prepared to deal with the matter on behalf of the Disciplinary Committee in accordance with Section 4.1 of Ordinance 2006/1 he or she shall determine what penalties shall be imposed. The penalty shall comprise the following or any combination of same:

For a First Offence

- a) a reprimand;
- b) a warning;
- c) a fine not exceeding £250;
- d) a decision that the coursework concerned is disallowed; or
- e) a recommendation to the Board of Examiners that if it decides, on the basis of the candidate's overall performance, to permit the candidate to repeat the coursework concerned, it should consider specifying that the re-submission should not take place until at least the corresponding period in the next academic session and that the candidate should not be permitted to gain further credit towards a qualification in the meantime.

For a Second Offence

- a) a reprimand;
- b) a warning;
- c) a fine not exceeding £250;
- d) a decision that the work in all examinations and assessments being considered by the Board of Examiners concurrently with the coursework concerned is disallowed; or
- e) a recommendation to the Board of Examiners that the candidate be required to withdraw from his or her course.

2.7 The Provost shall report his or her decision to the Board of Examiners who shall determine the candidate's results and progress under 2.8 below; the Provost's decision shall also be reported to the Director of [Corporate Planning and Governance](#) ~~Planning and Governance Services~~ and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) for information.

2.8 The candidate shall have the right of appeal as provided in the Ordinance 2006/1; pending the expiry of the appeal period the Board of Examiners shall make two provisional decisions on the candidate's result and progress as follows:

- a) the first decision to apply if no appeal is made or if an appeal is made but not upheld;
- b) an alternative decision to apply if an appeal is upheld.

2.9 The provisional decisions made at the Board of Examiners shall be minuted but the candidate's result shall be formally recorded pro tem as "decision

deferred". The candidate shall be informed of his or her examination result and progress according to the following procedures:

- a) if the candidate does not appeal by the expiry date, the Board of Examiners' decision shall be communicated immediately to him or her by the Pro-Vice- Chancellor (Teaching and Learning);
- b) if the candidate appeals and the appeal is not upheld the Board of Examiners' decision shall be communicated to him or her by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) immediately the appeal has been concluded;
- c) if the candidate appeals and the appeal is upheld the Board of Examiners' decision shall be communicated immediately to him or her by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

2.10 Where there is a significant lapse of time between the date of the Provost's decision and the meeting of the Board of Examiners the Course Committee may, in the light of the Provost's decision and any subsequent appeal, take such action as it considers necessary in advance of the Board of Examiners.

2.11 Where the Provost is of the opinion that the gravity of the offence appears to warrant it he or she shall report the matter to the Disciplinary Committee for consideration in accordance with Section 4.4 of Ordinance 2006/1.

NOTE: For the purpose of these procedures offences which were committed at any time during a candidate's previous or current period of registration shall be regarded as previous offences.

NEW SECTION

OFFENCES OF PLAGIARISM IN COURSEWORK

3.1 Where a tutor, supervisor or other member of staff suspects that a piece of coursework contains plagiarised material, the piece of work may be submitted to the Turnitin detection system, or other detection system as appropriate if it has not already been screened as part of the submission process. The member of staff should also consult texts and other members of staff in order to ascertain if plagiarised material is present. Staff may also wish to examine the candidate orally on the content of the coursework or ask the student to attend an interview to discuss the piece of work. A record of the meeting should be kept. Failure, on the candidate's part, to attend for interview cannot be taken as conclusive proof of plagiarism. Academic judgement should be exercised in order to determine if plagiarism of a very minor nature may be attributed to incorrect referencing techniques and should be penalised as such, rather than as plagiarism.

- 3.2 Where a member of staff is satisfied that there is plagiarised material in a candidate's work, he/she should bring this to the attention of the module co-ordinator who should forward a written report to the Course/Subject Director.
- 3.3 The Course/Subject Director may make such further enquiries as may be necessary. The Course/Subject Director should consult with the module co-ordinator and member of staff and, if they agree that plagiarism has taken place, the candidate should be penalised in accordance with the Framework of Penalties for Plagiarism Offences in Taught Programmes, as follows. The candidate should be informed accordingly.
- 3.4 The candidate has the right of appeal in accordance with the Regulations Governing Examinations in Programmes of Study on the grounds of procedural irregularity following the meeting of the Board of Examiners, or the Ordinance of Student Discipline as appropriate.

GUIDELINES ON TREATMENT OF EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

(Note: in this document, unless there is an indication to the contrary, the term Course Director should be taken to include Subject Director, and the term Board of Examiners, or Examiners, should be taken as covering pre-Examination Boards and Campus Progress and Award Boards)

1. Definition

Extenuating circumstances are defined as circumstances that could not reasonably be foreseen and that either (a) prevent a student from submitting work for assessment (whether by coursework or examination) or else (b) prevent the student from demonstrating / achieving their full potential in the assessment in question. *Extenuating circumstances are normally health-related, or of a sensitive/personal nature, or relate to some unforeseen emergency or crisis affecting the student's situation.*

2. Current Practice and Regulations (2006-07)

The University requires extenuating evidence to be presented by students on an EC1 form, accompanied by documentary evidence where appropriate. EC1 forms should be submitted to Course Directors, and considered then by Boards of Examiners. In practice, the Board usually accepts the Course Director's recommendation on the acceptability of the evidence, but this can place considerable pressure on Course Directors and can lead to inconsistencies in approach. The following guidelines have therefore been drawn up with a view to standardising procedures for handling EC1 Forms and achieving consistency in decision-making across courses and across Schools.

Students wishing to have extenuating circumstances taken into account must complete and submit an EC1 form to their Course Director as soon as possible, but no later than five working days after the examination in question, or else no later than the submission date for the coursework in question. *Exceptionally, a late submission may be accepted e.g. if the student has been incapacitated by serious illness or injury.*

3. Corroboration

In most cases, the EC1 form must normally be accompanied by authentic and persuasive corroborative evidence in the form of a medical certificate or other documentary evidence from *a reputable source* e.g. the PSNI, a solicitor, counsellor or *elected* representative. Academic staff are not medically trained, and so a medical certificate must be submitted if a medical reason is claimed. *If the student anticipates a delay in obtaining corroboration, it is important that (s)he submits an EC1 form before the deadline, with an indication that a further letter is to follow. The nurses in the University Health Centre may be able to confirm a student's symptoms, if a GP appointment cannot be arranged soon enough.*

4. Impact of Extenuating Circumstances

It is important to recognise that all students have to cope with the ups and downs of everyday life – e.g. domestic disputes, money pressures, relationship difficulties, the work-life balance – and so the routine distractions, obstacles and frustrations encountered in the normal course of events will not normally be accepted as valid extenuating circumstances.

The EC1 form requires students to comment on the impact of their extenuating circumstances. It is not enough simply to demonstrate that the student suffered illness, anxiety or inconvenience in the run-up to the assessment in question. For example, a migraine suffered on the day of an examination will probably have a more detrimental impact on ultimate performance than a week spent in bed with 'flu at the start of the semester. Both the medical certificate and the EC1 form will have to establish a clear and timely connection between the extenuating circumstances and the alleged impaired performance. The EC1 should also specify precisely which modules or elements of modules were affected.

5. Anxiety and Stress / Student Support Services

A certain degree of stress, anxiety and pre-examination nerves, and associated psychosomatic symptoms, are very common in the run-up to examinations. Coping with this pressure is part and parcel of the student experience. Presented with evidence of pre-examination stress, a Board of Examiners will be entitled to take into account:

- the extent to which this stress prevented the student from performing to his/her full potential (and NB some students perform better when under pressure);
- the extent to which this stress is of a different nature to that experienced by all students at examination time;
- the extent to which this stress was self-inflicted, i.e. a consequence of the student's failure to work steadily throughout the year;
- the extent to which this stress is likely to recur.

Students who experience pre-examination stress, or who have a disability that might impair their performance, are encouraged to consult Student Support Services. The counselling service offers confidential professional advice which can be accessed on each campus. This service is flexible and students can be seen individually, or if preferred, workshops can be organised on topics such as Exam Preparation or Stress Management. Students can also attend the weekly Drop-in sessions, without an appointment, or arrange a longer appointment (see www.studentsupport.ulster.ac.uk).

6. Disclosure of all Relevant Information

It is vital that students do not withhold evidence. EC1 forms are normally discussed at a pre-examination board meeting, in advance of the formal Board of Examiners. Meetings are conducted under conditions of absolute confidentiality, and members have wide experience of the full range of problems that students can encounter. The minutes of the Board of Examiners will only record whether or not extenuating circumstances were

considered and accepted/rejected – the nature of the circumstances will not be minuted.

While there may be some factors which the student prefers not to commit to paper, (s)he should reveal these by means of a private meeting with his/her Adviser of Studies or Course Director. If satisfied, the Adviser of Studies or Course Director may then report (without full disclosure) that in their professional opinion the student has legitimate extenuating circumstances. However, the onus is always on the student to specify the degree of detail that (s)he wishes to have disclosed, *and this will need to be sufficient to satisfy the Board of Examiners.*

7. Examples of Extenuating Circumstances

The term *extenuating circumstances* will have a restrictive interpretation. While an element of discretion will always have to remain with Boards of Examiners, some examples should serve to differentiate between valid and non-valid extenuating circumstances:

Examples of extenuating circumstances that may be accepted by an Exam Board:

- (a) Illness in the run-up to an examination or coursework deadline, or during an examination
- (b) Bereavement in the run-up to an examination or coursework deadline (*normally a close relative i.e. parent, child, partner or sibling*)
- (c) Sudden illness or emergency in connection with a family member or dependent
- (d) Civil disturbance (rioting, intimidation, bomb-scares, bus and rail disruption)
- (e) Traumatic event (e.g. being assaulted, or witnessing an accident or assault)
- (f) Extreme weather conditions preventing either study or travel
- (g) Domestic upheaval (fire, burglary, eviction)

Examples of extenuating circumstances that would not normally be accepted:

- (h) Employment commitments limiting time available for study (*although greater flexibility may be applicable to part-time students in full-time employment*)
- (i) Pressure of other academic work e.g. other coursework due around the same time
- (j) Having to take a pre-arranged holiday
- (k) Wedding preparations
- (l) Sporting commitments (*although exceptions might sometimes be made, e.g. if the student were representing his/her country, or the University*)
- (m) Missing a bus
- (n) Moving house
- (o) Failure of IT systems, or inability to gain access to IT systems, when the student has not taken adequate precautionary measures – e.g. failure to keep copies or save back-up versions, or ill-judged reliance on friends' or classmates' equipment or help, or leaving it to the last

minute to seek access to University facilities. In all such cases, these difficulties could have been foreseen and avoided at an earlier stage.

NB These examples are not definitive, and are intended only as a guide. In all cases, the Board of Examiners has ultimate authority to use its discretion, taking into account the full circumstances of a particular case.

8. Student's Desired Outcome

In their EC1 submissions, students should always make clear what outcome they are hoping for, in the knowledge that marks will never be awarded to compensate for extenuating circumstances. The most common outcome, when the Examiners accept an EC1 form, is that the student is allowed another attempt at the assessment, with no penalty (a "first sit"). Students should be prepared to discuss the financial options open to them (e.g. fees, loans, bursaries) with the Students' Union, or staff from Finance/Student Support, as a particular course of action may prove to be unrealistic without the necessary financial support. For example, if a student's performance suffered because of financial problems, and (s)he hopes to repeat the year without financial support, then the problems are likely to recur.

9. Role of Course Directors and Advisers of Studies

Course Directors and Studies Advisers should emphasise to students that they are precluded from predicting or guaranteeing that a student's extenuating circumstances will be accepted - this is solely at the discretion of the Board of Examiners, except in the single case of extensions to coursework submission deadlines (below). Staff are nevertheless encouraged to point out when the student appears to have a very weak case, or to have submitted insufficient corroborative evidence, but at all times the onus is on the student to present a sufficiently persuasive case, with reference to the principles set out in these guidelines.

10. Extension to the Deadline for Coursework Submission

Boards of Examiners have delegated to Course Directors responsibility for granting extensions to the deadline for submitting coursework, but only in cases where a compelling case has clearly been made. If the Course Director has any reservations, e.g. if insufficient corroboration is presented, then (s)he should warn the student that the EC1 form might not be accepted and the student should be advised to submit the coursework. Should the Board of Examiners subsequently accept the student's extenuating circumstances as valid, then EITHER the coursework will not be marked OR, if it has been marked, that mark will not be divulged and the student will have another opportunity to undergo the assessment in question.

11. Misuse of EC1 Forms as "Insurance Policy"

When extenuating circumstances are submitted in advance of an assessment, this is tantamount to asking to defer the examination or coursework assessment, and the student should make this clear by specifying their desired outcome. Thereafter, if the student submits an EC1 form and fails to attempt an examination or submit coursework, there is an element of risk in that the student cannot guarantee that the examiners will accept the case

presented. However, this same set of guidelines is available to both staff and students, and the guidelines indicate what cases will or will not be accepted.

Attempting an examination or submitting coursework is normally seen as a clear indication on the student's part that (s)he is fit to undergo assessment. If the student is taken ill during the examination, or concludes afterwards that their decision to undergo assessment was mistaken in light of their circumstances, then (s)he should submit an EC1 form within five working days.

This EC1 submission amounts to a request that the examination script or coursework should be discounted, and should not be marked. In such an event, the Course Director *may* instruct the appropriate module co-ordinator not to mark the work until after the Board of Examiners has ruled on its acceptability. If the work has been marked by the time the EC1 form is submitted, then the mark *may* be cancelled and the student given another opportunity to undergo the assessment in question.

12. Withdrawal of Extenuating Circumstances

As explained above, a student will not normally be able to withdraw an EC1 form after receiving a mark for the work in question. However, a student who submits an EC1 form in advance of an assessment, and who then changes his/her mind (e.g. because of a rapid improvement in their circumstances) may withdraw the EC1 form before it is too late, i.e. in the following circumstances:

- by submitting the coursework within the deadline, along with an accompanying statement that (s)he wishes to withdraw the EC1 form, and/or;
- by attempting the examination after submitting a statement to the effect that they wish to withdraw the EC1 form. This statement can only be submitted to the Course Director, Adviser of Studies or School office before the start of the examination, and must be witnessed and signed off to this effect, with the precise time recorded.

13. Records of Decisions – Guidelines for Staff

Cases of extenuating circumstances should be discussed initially at the pre-board meeting of examiners, and a confidential note kept of why any cases were not accepted. An annual report on EC1 submissions will be prepared for each Faculty Teaching & Learning Committee, but individual student names will not be recorded on any reports.

A list of names of students whose extenuating circumstances were considered should be attached as an appendix to the formal minutes of the Board of Examiners, indicating only whether they were accepted or not i.e. no indication of the nature of the circumstances should be recorded. *Faculties/Schools* will retain a file of EC1 forms in a secure and confidential location, but this file will be periodically reviewed and normally individual EC1 forms will be shredded within one year of the student's leaving the University (by graduating or otherwise).

14. Communication of Decisions to Students

The Examinations Office will communicate the formal decision of the Board of Examiners, but Course Directors and the relevant module coordinators are encouraged separately to communicate these decisions to students in a timely manner.

15. Leave of Absence / Notification of Absence (NA1 Forms)

If a student's difficulties are insurmountable, and/or likely to take a considerable period before they are resolved, then (s)he should consider applying for Leave of Absence (LOA) until the situation has been resolved. Students can apply for LOA by completing section B of a *Student Record Amendment Form*, available from School and Faculty Offices. LOA should normally only be invoked for an interruption of studies which will mean that the student will not be attending for the rest of the semester/year, and will not be undergoing assessment.

LOA is normally granted for a maximum of one year at a time, so that circumstances are reviewed, and for a cumulative maximum of two years. If the difficulties seem likely to extend beyond this period, the student should consider withdrawing from the University and reapplying for entry when fit, or when circumstances allow. In such an event, appropriate exemptions may be granted but students are urged to consult their Adviser of Studies about all such issues.

Other shorter periods of absence, which are unlikely to affect overall academic progress, should be notified using the Notification of Absence system (NA1 forms).

16. SA1 Appeals and Retrospective Extenuating Circumstances

Students can appeal Examination Board decisions only on grounds of alleged procedural irregularity, or else because they had extenuating circumstances which, for a very good reason, were not made known to the Examination Board at the time (SA1 appeals). An appeals panel cannot change marks, but it can make decisions affecting a student's progress status. In reaching its decision, the appeals panel will have to be satisfied that there was a compelling reason why the new evidence could not have been communicated to the Examination Board within the deadline; otherwise the appeal will normally be rejected.

Students cannot challenge academic judgment, and they cannot appeal on the grounds of e.g. alleged bad teaching if they have not raised this issue beforehand. Appeals along the lines of "*I didn't realise the extent to which I had been affected until I received my marks*" will normally be rejected. Full details of the SA1 appeals procedure are available at <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/academicservices/student/appeals.html>.

'APPROVED ABSENCE AND INDEPENDENT STUDY PROGRAMME'

1. CURRENT UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS WITH RESPECT TO ATTENDANCE

1.1 The University's General Regulations for Students state:

- Students must be punctual and regular in their attendance at such classes or other forms of instruction as may be prescribed.
- Students shall keep the prescribed dates for their courses and at the discretion of the Senate may have to fulfil such additional requirements either in vacation or in intercalary periods as may be specified in course regulations.
- A student who has not been in attendance for more than three days* through illness or other cause must notify immediately either the Course/Subject Director or the research supervisor. Where the absence is for a period of more than five working days, and is caused by illness which may affect the student's studies, the student shall arrange for a medical certificate to be presented in accordance with section 18 hereof.
- The board of the faculty shall deem a student to have withdrawn from the University if the student has been absent without leave from prescribed instruction for a period of four weeks or an aggregate of four weeks in the semester.

1.2 The Student Charter emphasises that the University expects students to attend punctually lectures, training programmes and assessments, and to participate actively in tutorials and other timetabled activities and meetings.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

2.1 Current University regulations require students to complete a Notification of Absence form (NA1) if they have not or will not be in attendance. Specifically the guidance states that:

A student who has not been in attendance for more than three days* through illness or other cause must notify immediately either the Course/Subject Director or the research supervisor. Where the absence is for a period of more than five working days, and is caused by illness which may affect the student's studies, the student shall arrange for a medical certificate to be presented.

* To be revised.

3. ACTION IN RESPECT OF A REQUEST FROM AN ELITE/HIGH PERFORMANCE STUDENT ATHLETE FOR APPROVED ABSENCE AND INDEPENDENT STUDY PROGRAMME (AA & ISP)

- 3.1 The period of absence that may be required for student athletes may be significantly more than 3 days. Selection for major international events which may be hosted anywhere in the world may not be announced until as a little as a month in advance of the event. High performance athletes may therefore need greater flexibility with respect to attendance given the time frame involved and the distance that may need to be travelled.
- 3.2 Research shows that attendance is a key component in academic success. Elite/High Performance student athletes need to be aware of the potentially negative impact of absence on their studies.
- 3.3 It is proposed that elite/high performance student athletes, in good academic standing, be given the opportunity to make an application with documentary evidence for 'Approved Absence and Independent Study Programme'.
- 3.4 In order to be considered for this flexible arrangement elite/high performance student athletes must be in good academic standing and normally be able to attend A MINIMUM OF 60% of their timetabled classes over the semester for each module in which they are enrolled. Elite/High performance student/athletes application for an AA & ISP must be submitted at the earliest possible opportunity and it must be supported/endorsed by their NGB or SCNI or SINI.
- 3.5 Academic staff, in particular studies advisors, need to be aware of potential problems, be able to offer advice and help the student plan an Independent Study Programme (ISP) to be adhered to during the absence.
- 3.6 An ISP will require a student to continue with their studies in a full time mode. The ISP will require the student athlete to follow the same course of study as their full time on site counterparts meeting all the necessary assessment, reading and study time demands.
- 3.7 In conjunction with the Course Director the student athlete must commit to and sign an ISP agreement.
- 3.8 Students who are completing work or clinical placements or teaching practice may have more difficulty in taking up this option. Leave of absence and slow tracking are options still available to them.

4. APPLICATION FOR APPROVED ABSENCE BY ELITE STUDENT ATHLETES

- 4.1 If an elite/high performance student athlete in good academic standing produces documentary evidence of the need for absence an application for approved absence must be submitted to the Course Director.
- 4.2 If absence from no more than 40% of classes is required, then no action in relation to the student's registration status need be taken. If absence from

more than 40% of class is required then the option of Leave of Absence (LOA) or Slow Tracking will normally be recommended.

- 4.3 The following responsibilities and timeline apply where an Approved Absence and Independent Study Programme is feasible.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDIES ADVISOR, MODULE COORDINATOR, COURSE DIRECTOR AND ELITE/HIGH PERFORMANCE STUDENT ATHLETE IN RESPECT OF AN APPLICATION FOR APPROVED ABSENCE (AA) AND INDEPENDENT STUDY PROGRAMME (ISP)

Responsibilities of Studies Advisor

1. Review impact of proposed absence on attendance on modules and confirm percentage of classes that will be missed in module/s (a minimum of 60% attendance is required).
2. Review all options available to student based on current academic standing (slow tracking, LOA and AA&ISP).
3. Discuss and advise student on impact on study of AA&ISP.
4. Discuss completed AA&ISP application and learning agreement with Course Director and Module Coordinator/s.
5. Respond to student emails and communications when on AA&ISP and copy to Course Director and Module Coordinator/s.

Responsibilities of Course Director

1. Discuss completed AA&ISP application with student.
2. Check all documentation on selection/competition from National Governing Body.
3. Review impact of AA&ISP on potential academic performance.
4. Receive, check and lead discussion on completed student AA&ISP application and learning agreement/s with Studies Advisor, Module Coordinator/s and Subject Coordinator.
5. Communicate decision to student on AA&ISP application and learning agreement.
6. Respond to student emails and communications when on AA&ISP and copy Studies Advisor and Module Coordinator/s.

Responsibilities of Module Coordinator/s

1. Design Independent Study Programme with student. The content of which should include as a minimum the following:
 - a. list presentations for topics that will be missed and where & when presentations can be accessed;
 - b. provide list of readings for weeks that student will be off campus & where they can be accessed before departure;
 - c. agree mechanism for receipt of coursework/assessments due during period of absence;
 - d. agree frequency of communication with student.
2. Complete and sign the learning agreement with the student.
3. Copy learning agreement to Studies Advisor & Course Director.

Responsibilities of Student

1. Obtain documentary evidence of selection for major sporting event or preparation for major sporting event.
2. Produce a week-by week timetable to show exactly when you will be absent and when you will be present at classes in the University during the semester in question.
3. Consult the module timetables in order to calculate the % of timetabled class contacts you are **able** to attend for each module in the semester.
4. Arrange meeting with Studies Advisor to discuss options.
5. Meet with Module Coordinator/s to agree an Independent Study Programme.
6. Complete AA&ISP application form and copy to Studies Advisor.
7. Arrange meeting with Course Director to discuss AA&ISP application and Learning Agreement (1 learning agreement to reflect independent study programme for module/s missed).
8. Request your NGB sports mentor to read and sign the learning agreement to demonstrate their understanding of this commitment.
9. Keep in regular contact with Module Coordinator/s when absent.
10. Contact Studies Advisor if you are having problems.

Timeline of Process

1. Student meets Studies Advisor re: AA&ISP proposal.
2. Student meets Module Coordinator/s to discuss possible ISP.
3. Student meets Course Director to discuss AA&ISP.
4. Course Director arranges meeting with Module Coordinator/s, Studies Advisor and Subject Coordinator to review proposal (or subject team if timing suits).
5. Decision is communicated to Student.
6. Student meets with Module Coordinator/s to devise ISP.
7. Student takes ISP learning agreement signed by student and module coordinator/s to Course Director.

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING

Consilium Technologies Award				
Eligibility	Criteria for Award	Selecting Body	Value of Award	Origin
Final year BEng Hons Software Engineering students	Best Project	Board of Examiners	£150	Consilium Technologies
Microsoft Prize				
Eligibility	Criteria for Award	Selecting Body	Value of Award	Origin
Students completing MSc E-Learning	Best student completing MSc	Board of Examiners	£200	Microsoft
DAF Trucks Award of Excellence				
Eligibility	Criteria for Award	Selecting Body	Value of Award	Origin
Final year BSc Hons Transportation (with specialisms) students	Best overall final year student	Board of Examiners	£500 + Perpetual Cup + Travel Bursary	TBF Thompson DAF Trucks and DAF Trucks Ltd
Translink Sponsored Studentships				
Eligibility	Criteria for Award	Selecting Body	Value of Award	Origin
BSc Hons Transportation (with specialisms)	Best 3: 1 st year (2006/7), 1 st and 2 nd year (2007/8/9); 1 st , 2 nd , 4 th year (2009/10)	Translink	£3000 building to £9000	Translink Ltd
May Rea Memorial Prize				
Eligibility	Criteria for Award	Selecting Body	Value of Award	Origin
Final year BEng Hons Civil Engineering and BSc Hons Transportation students	Best presentation of final year project in Civil Engineering or Transportation	Board of Examiners	Trophy and gift (£50)	The Rea Family

FACULTY OF LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Institute of Biology Maxwell Memorial Prize				
Eligibility	Criteria for Award	Selecting Body	Value of Award	Origin
Best overall final year BSc Hons Biology student	Overall mark	Board of Examiners	£100	NI Institute of Biology
Professor Robert Bowman Memorial Award for Leadership in Nursing				
Eligibility	Criteria for Award	Selecting Body	Value of Award	Origin
Students enrolled on NUR561J2 and NUR561M2 'Leadership and Management for Awarded Practice'	Highest score in module	Board of Examiners (June)	Piece of Tyrone Crystal to the value of £120 - £130 and £50 book Token	United Hospitals Trust School of Nursing